

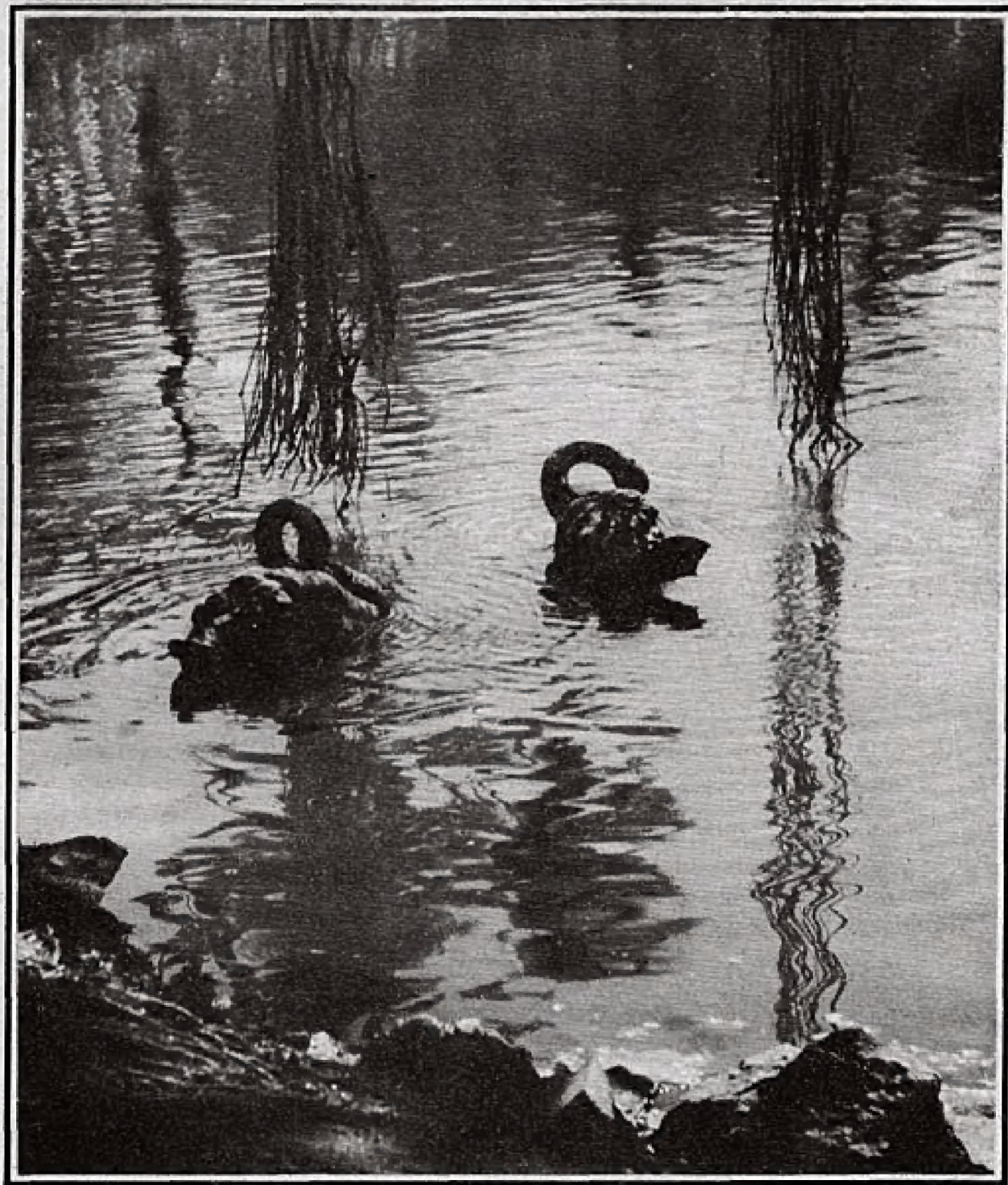
CHANDAMAMA

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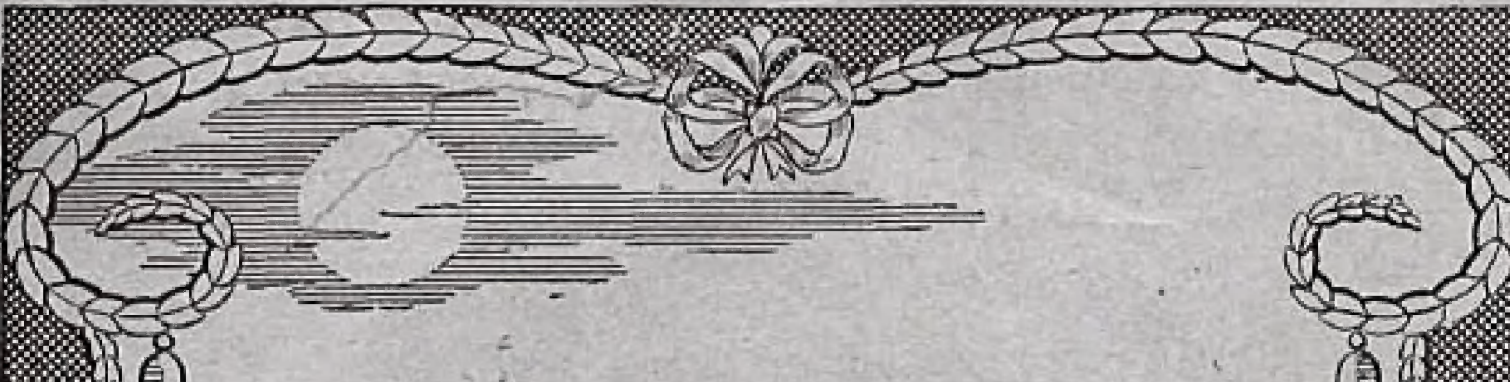
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CHANDAMAMA

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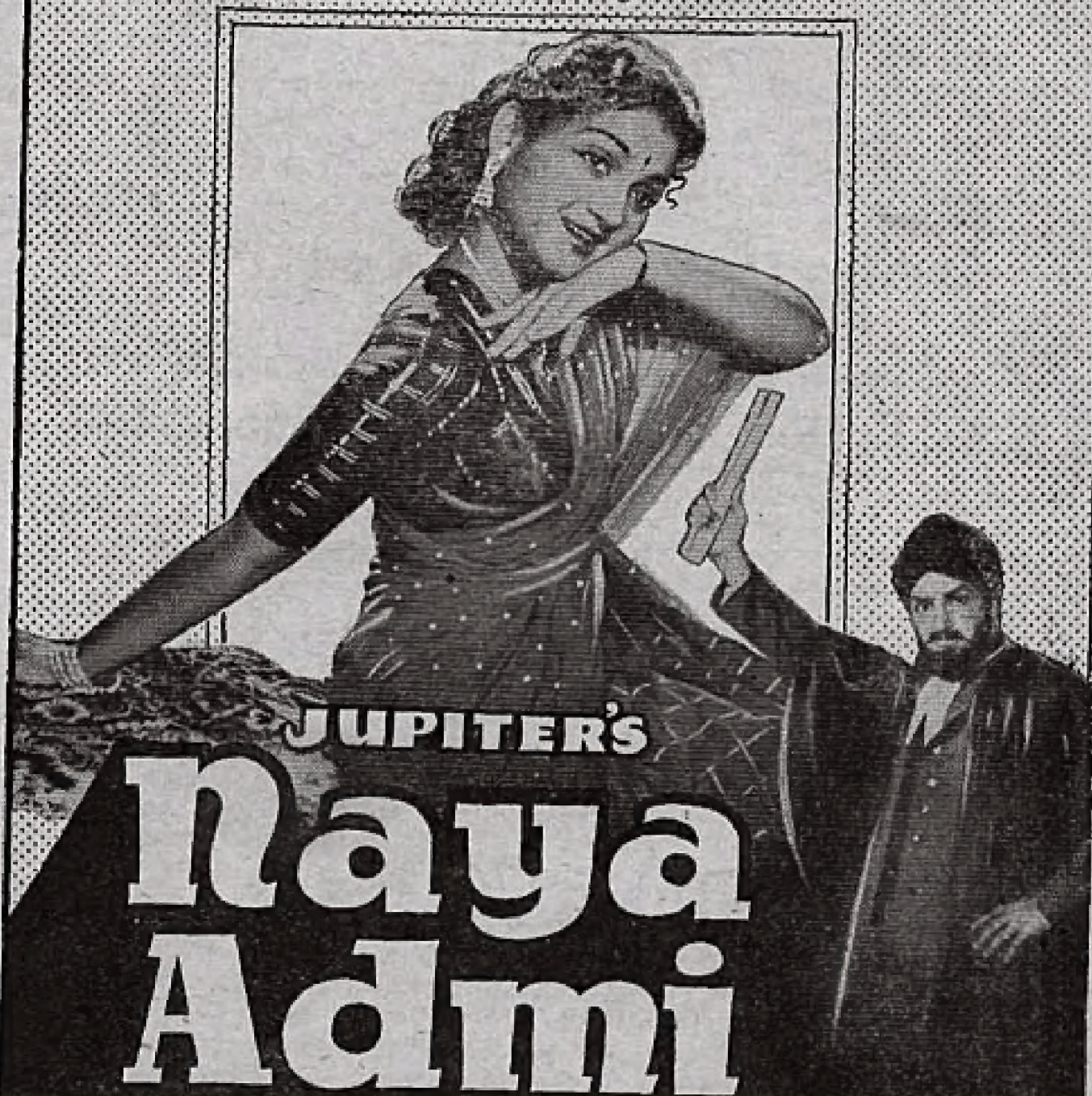


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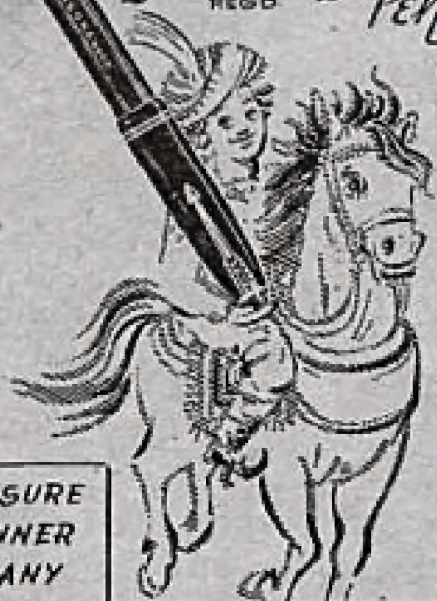
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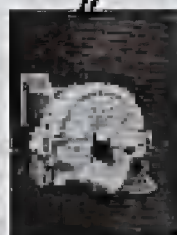
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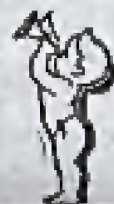
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CHANDAMAMA

Controlling Editor: CHAKRAPANI

WE are very glad to offer this Special Number to our readers hoping that it will add to the quota of happiness that awaits them on the occasion of Diwali.

In this issue we are starting Stories of Bethal. Popular with several generations these stories have a high place in our traditional literature.

We are also starting a series of articles on Magic by the world famous Magician Prof. P. C. Sorcar. These articles will enable the reader to entertain his or her friends occasionally.

We wish all our readers a Happy Diwali.

NOVEMBER
1955

VOL. I
NO. 5



THE TEST

*A city there was
Of traditions hoary,
Named Nagalapur—
There begins this story!*

*The king of the city
Wanted the best
Minister of state;
So he planned a test.*

*"Lo, there is a cart
Wending its way!*



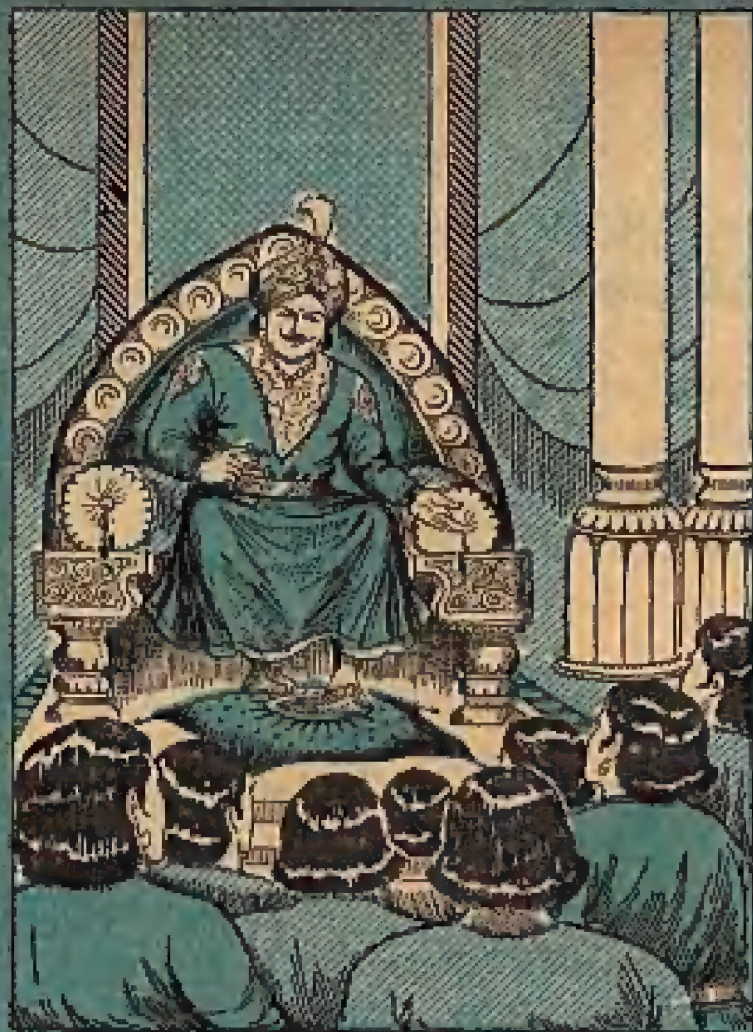
*What does it carry?
Let the contestants say!"*

*The aspirants ran
And the cartload scanned;
"Mangoes," they said,
But the king, as planned*

*Was ready with the series
Of questions and so
He asked them to tell him
The price of the cargo.*

*Now in the meanwhile
Following the cart*





Story Poem

*He answers all questions.
He knows everything.*

*Ready with the answers
He was never late,
And the young man was made
The minister of state!*

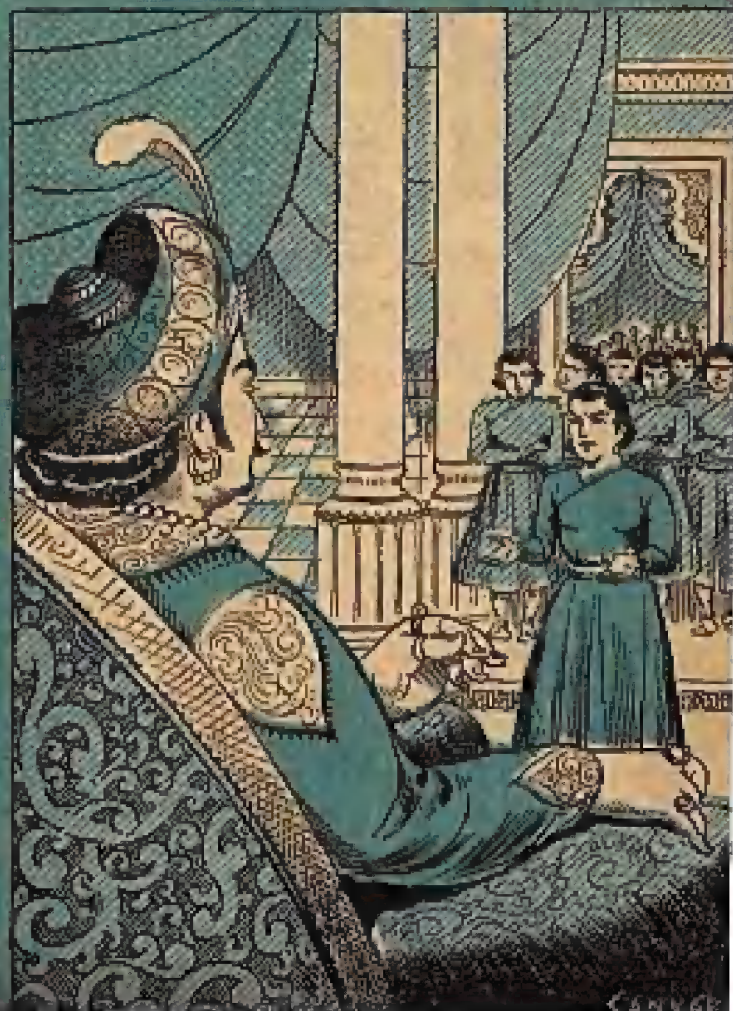
*Incomplete knowledge
Of anything is bad.
Learn all things in full
As did the young Lad!*

*A clever young man
Finding a lot.*

*The candidates returned
With the mere notion
That the price of the mangoes
Was three rupees a dozen!*

*"Can you tell me the place whence
The fruit are being brought?"
Asked the king and the poor fools
Ran back to the cart.*

*Here comes the young man!
He stands before the king.*



THE FRONT COVER

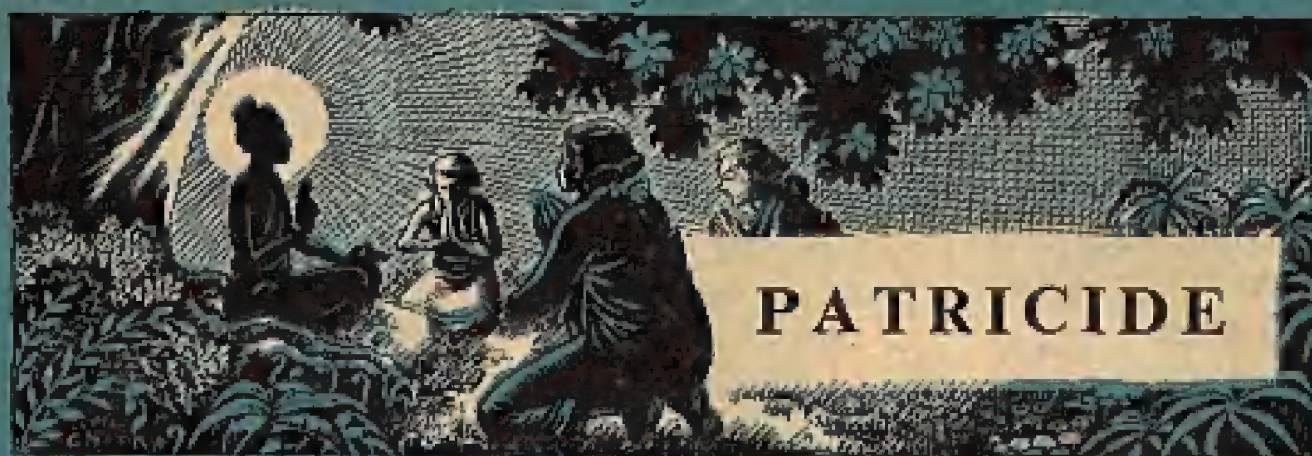
IN our country Diwali or the Festival of Lights is the brightest and happiest day in the year. It is a day of great rejoicing to young and old alike, a day of gay decoration and joyful celebration. For some of us it is also the beginning of a New Year.

The Festival of Lights, coming as it always does on the day of New Moon, stands as a symbol of Light triumphing over Darkness and Man triumphing over Evil. The origin for this festival makes the symbolism very clear.

Narak was a mighty powerful Demon. He was unconquerable. Knowing this he began to use his power to torture mankind and to behave like a tyrant to one and all. Under his devilish rule things like kindness, truth, justice and generosity became scarce and the entire world was plunged in a gloom that could not be driven away by a thousand suns.

Lord Krishna took upon himself the task of destroying this powerful Demon and bringing light and happiness to the whole world. Accompanied by his beautiful wife, Satya Bhama, Krishna met Demon Narak in a fierce battle. It was a prolonged battle and during the fight Krishna got so badly hit that he fell unconscious. Then Satya Bhama who was driving her lord's chariot took up arms and with one arrow shot down the hateful tyrant.

Narak died on the day before the New Moon. The entire world celebrated the following day as a day of Liberation from Evil. Millions and millions of lights were lighted all over the land, as they still do to this day.



PATRICIDE

WHILE Brahma - dutt ruled Banaras Bodhisatva was born into a peasant family. His parents named him Lotus and brought him up affectionately.

Even as a small boy Lotus displayed an intelligence far beyond his years. He was very much attached to his grandfather.

The old man was of an advanced age. He could not even move about. So someone or other had to attend to him always. The mother of Lotus did not like this and she anxiously looked forward to his death but death appeared to avoid him.

One day she complained to her husband, "I am quite vexed with the old man. All my time is wasted on attending to him."

"He won't live long now," her husband assured her. "He is very, very old."

"And yet he will not die," the wife moaned. "He is taking the life out of me."

"Let him live his life out," the husband said. "What can we do about it? Kill him off deliberately?"

"Why not?" his wife retorted. "Life is a burden both to him and to us. How much killing does an old man require?"

At first the peasant felt that it would be horrible to kill his own father. But, as time passed and his wife's nagging became worse and worse, he began to feel that killing his father was quite a reasonable thing after all.



At last the peasant found a way of killing the old man and making him disappear. "Father," he said to the old man one day, "I arranged for a loan in a neighbouring village. They are ready to give the loan if you come and take it in person. The cart is ready, please get into it."

The old man believed his son and got into the cart and Lotus who never liked being away from his grandfather climbed into the cart and refused to stay behind.

The peasant was forced to take his son along with his father.

He drove the cart till they reached a forest. In the forest the peasant stopped the cart, took a spade and went into the bushes promising to return soon.

"I too shall come back soon," said Lotus to his grandfather. He too took a spade and stealthily went behind his father. After going some distance Lotus saw his father digging a pit with the spade behind a bush. He started digging another pit on the other side of the bush.

The peasant heard someone else digging nearby. He went round the bush and was amazed to see his little son also digging a pit. "What are you digging for?" he asked Lotus.

"Whatever you are digging for!" replied Lotus calmly.

"Do you know what I am digging for?" the peasant asked.

"No," said Lotus.

"Well," said the peasant, "I am digging a grave for my father. As a son it is my duty to bury my father when he is dead."

"But he is still alive!" Lotus said in surprise.

"You never can tell," the peasant told Lotus. "Death may come any minute."

"Well," said Lotus, "It is my duty to bury my father and, as you say, death may come any minute."

The peasant was taken aback at what his little son said. Only when Lotus uttered those words did the peasant realise what a shameful thing he was about to do. He picked up his spade and said to Lotus, "Let's go!" Lotus too stopped digging and went behind his father.

The peasant turned the cart back and drove home.

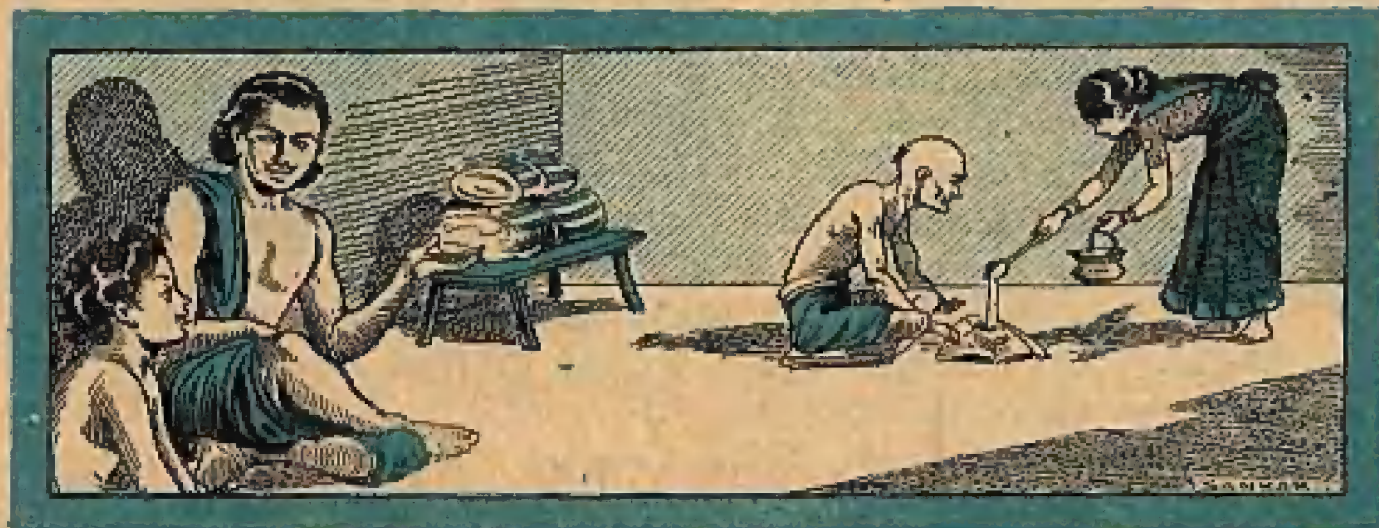
In the meantime the peasant's wife prepared a feast of celebration and awaited the return of her husband and son.

When she saw that her father-in-law came back, she was quite disappointed. The peasant narrated to her what took place in the forest. Her heart was crushed when she heard what Lotus did and said.

"How nice we were to him!" she wailed. "And he wants to dig a grave for his own father! How can he hate us so? How can I look at his face?"

"Was not my father nice to me?" said the peasant. "How did I intend to behave to him? Don't think our child doesn't love us. He only wanted to teach us a lesson. Let us learn this lesson properly."

After this the parents of Lotus never contemplated any mean business.



GIANT COOKIES!

ONCE a fool read in a book that those who dig a tank enjoy the bliss of heaven. So he sold all his property and got a tank dug. Everyday he paid a visit to this tank.

One day he found one of its sides cracked and the next day another. He wanted to find out who was doing this and he kept watch a whole night. At about midnight he saw a huge bull entering the tank and butting the side of it with his horns. The fool ran for the bull and caught hold of its tail. But the bull rose into the air with the fool hanging on to his tail and soon they reached *Kailas*. For the bull was none other than the Holy Nandi of *Kailas*.

The inhabitants of *Kailas* treated their guest well. What amazed him most were the cookies they served him; they were the size of pumpkins! The next day the fool returned to earth with the help of Nandi and called all his relatives to tell them his experience at *Kailas*.

"You must take us also to *Kailas*!", some of his relatives insisted. The fool agreed. Next night he took them to the tank. When Nandi came the fool caught hold of his tail and the others held on to him in a chain and the journey to *Kailas* began. On the way, the man holding the fool asked, "What size were the cookies did you say?"

The fool left Nandi's tail and replied, "About this big!"





5

(On the Isle of Sorcery Samarsen, the commander-in-chief of Kundalini found many hazards including two sorcerers who had uncanny powers. While trying to avoid one of the sorcerers, One-eye, Samarsen lost two of his six followers and unexpectedly came upon the other sorcerer.)

SAMARSEN and his men went on watching the lake from behind the bushes. Now they could distinctly see the person standing in the lake. He was wearing the cap from the eye-like slits of which two beams of light appeared to shoot upwards. This was the same cap which they had seen hanging by the branch over the water of the lake.

Samarsen easily surmised that this man was the sorcerer Four-eyes. He had his extra eyes in his cap and he must have got his name only on account of it. Besides, had not he said to the giant creature, Big Tummy, "You think Four-eyes is such an easy morsel?"

"Now I must avoid being seen by this person!" Samarsen said

CHANDAMAMA



to himself and began to wonder how best he could do it. While he was thus engaged his followers were whispering among themselves and commenting upon the four eyes of the sorcerer. Samarsen was listening to their comments while he was busy thinking out a plan of escape.

Suddenly he spoke out, "Is it not true that this Four-eyes is a deadly enemy of One-eye?" His men assented.

One of them could read Samarsen's line of thought.

"Commander!" he said hesitatingly, "if I may be permitted to make a remark—"

"Certainly, my dear fellow!" Samarsen replied. "Every one of you has a right to make a suggestion. We stand in utmost need of collective thinking at the moment."

"If I read you correctly," the man said, "you appear to be thinking of turning to our advantage the enmity that exists between One-eye and Four-eyes. But I've a suggestion to make. The lion and the tiger may be deadly enemies, but at the same time each one is deadly enough. One mustn't forget that."

"There's a lot of truth in that," Samarsen said thoughtfully. "These are great magicians with the darkest forces of evil at their command..." Samarsen saw Four-eyes come out of the water and fell silent.

All the men were seized with a great dread. Their instincts told

them to run away. They hardly took one step when they heard the clear and bell-like voice of Four-eyes.

"You fools!" they heard. "Do you really expect to hoodwink me? No, you can't! Nothing can obstruct my vision—neither trees, nor rocks, nor hills. I can see through all. I can see everything that goes on on this isle. Wait!"

Four-eyes raised his voice and summoned the Awesome Owl and the Ape-man. Having heard the call both the creatures appeared and barred the way of Samarsen and his men. While the Ape-man flourished the branch of a tree in his hand to frighten them, the owl flew about making ear-splitting noises.

Now Samarsen knew where and how he stood. The situation was completely out of his hands. Their bows and arrows and swords were quite useless. "Now, friends," he told his men,





"it is up to Mother Kundalini to look after us."

The men stood dazed and transfixed as Four-eyes came to them with deliberate steps. But when he spoke his voice was soft and gentle: "Who are you?" he asked. "What brought you to this isle?" There was not the least hint of malice or cruelty in his speech and his face was quite tranquil and serene.

It was the way Four-eyes spoke to them that brought back their courage, though he was the

cause of its loss in the first place. Just for a moment Samarsen could not decide whether to answer the sorcerer's question but then he made up his mind to answer it since it was more than probable that the other knew all.

"Sir," said Samarsen, "we are from the Isle of Kundalini. While going on a voyage we were beset by a storm and brought here."

Four-eyes laughed. "My dear fellow," he said. "What you say is quite true. But how is it that you omitted to tell me why you started on a voyage at all?"

There was no concealing anything now and Samarsen made a clean breast of everything, telling Four-eyes how the kundalini coffers were empty, how he started on a voyage of plunder to fill them and how his plans were miscarried.

"Ha, ha!" Four-eyes laughed having listened to the tale of Samarsen. "So you started out

for wealth, defying the comet, and a storm flung you here! That's fine! Now, we too have a sorcerer here who is inordinately fond of wealth. Should you join forces ha, ha, ha!"

Four-eyes laughed till the surroundings resounded. Samarsen did not know how to take this laughter and, while he was searching for something to say, there was a booming call, "Hey, Death's-head! Hey, Devil's Serpent!... Come on! Watch out! Watch out!"

It was the unmistakable voice of the Sorcerer One-eye. Samarsen turned to his men who were shivering with fear and told them, "Go, hide in those thickets. It's One eye."

All of them dashed to the nearest thicket. They were hardly concealed when One-eye came upon the spot. The leering skull was floating above his head while the serpent accompanied him at his feet.



"Ah, I see you again!" One-eye shouted triumphantly on seeing Four-eyes. "After such a long time I got you!" Even as he said it he drew out a broad sword from his belt.

"Is it One-eye that I see?" Four-eyes said without moving an inch. "Welcome! Welcome!" Then he changed his sneering voice to a shout and called the Awesome Owl and the Ape-man. In an instant both were there and One-eye appeared to be taken aback at their sight.



Four-eyes did not fail to notice this. "My dear Owl," he said. "You already had a taste of his right eye. Have a go at the left one too."

At once the Owl flew at One-eye who shouted in panic, "Death's head! O Death's-head!" Clicking its bony-jaws the skull flew at the owl and they began to fight.

One-eye began to roar with laughter when Four-eyes, getting angry, shouted for the ape. The next instant the ape jumped at One-eye who summoned the serpent. Another fight ensued between the ape and the serpent.

The fight between the creatures of the sorcerers was prolonged, fierce and inconclusive. Samarsen and his men watching the struggle from behind the thickets commented upon it, "Both the parties are well matched," "That is to our advantage, you know."

Both the sorcerers eyed each other in anger. They knew that



this fight is not going to be decisive. Four-eyes at last laughed and lifted his cap from his head with the incantation, "Om—hreem!" Immediately he disappeared and at the same time his owl and ape also disappeared.

"You disappear, do you?" boomed One-eye. "Well, I shall see how long you'll remain safe and invisible! I shall get you, don't worry!"

Then he looked all round. Fortunately he could not notice

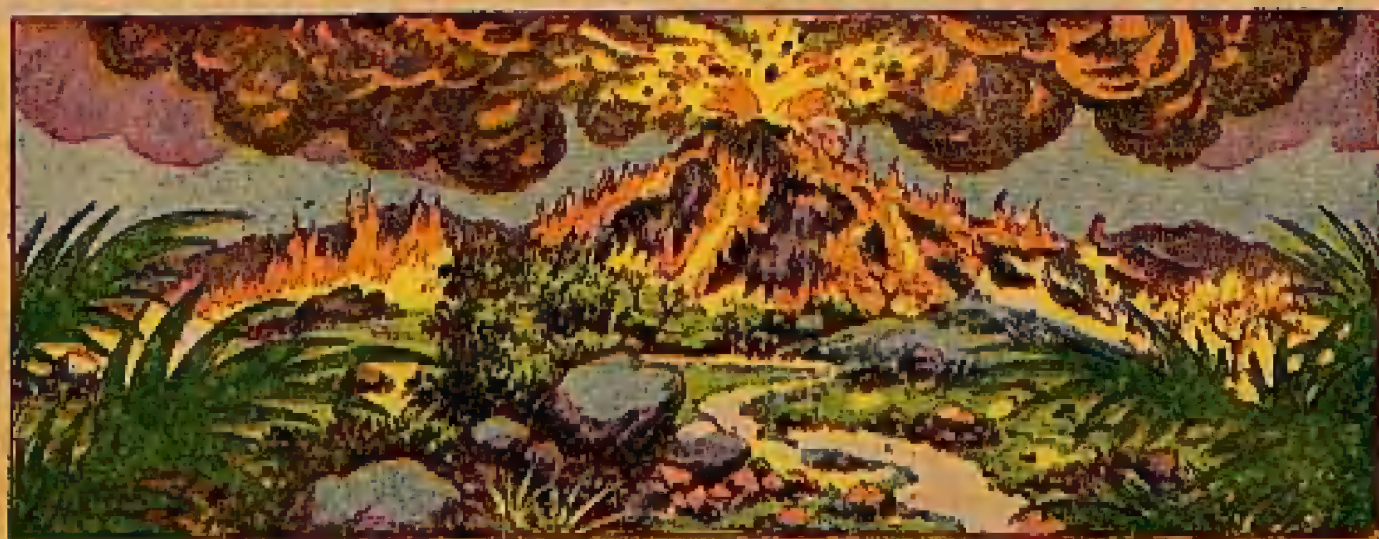
Samarsen and his men hiding in the thickets. He was still suffering from a lurking fear of the Awesome Owl. So he looked up at the tops of the trees flourishing his sword. He had enough cause to fear the owl because it was the same owl which made him blind in one eye! Its hoot was enough to make him perspire with fear.


When finally One-eye departed with his Death's-head and serpent the place became tranquil once more and the men hiding in the thicket heaved a sigh of relief and emerged from their hiding place.

Now their path was clear. They could go round the lake

and, keeping to the east as far as possible, they could hope to reach their ships in course of time. To their left there was a mountain. If they reached the otherside of it the coast might be very near.

So Samarsen led his men towards this mountain. They did not go very far when the earth began to shake under their feet and fearsome rumbling sounds proceeded from the interior of the earth. In another moment great columns of smoke and fire rose from the peak of the mountain. It was a terrific but fascinating sight. Samarsen and his men stood looking at the bursting volcano in great astonishment. *(To be continued)*



A detailed illustration in a classic style. A man in traditional Indian clothing, including a dhoti and a shawl, is walking towards the left. He has a sword tucked into his waist and a bundle on his back. On the ground near his feet lies a human skull. The background features a large, gnarled tree and a rocky, uneven terrain. The entire scene is rendered in a monochromatic, reddish-brown color scheme with fine line work.

The Minister's Demise

VIKRAM was the king of Prathisthan on the banks of the Godavari. One day a monk came to see him and gave him a fruit for a gift. The king took the fruit and gave it to a baby monkey playing nearby. The little monkey bit into the fruit and spat out a precious stone.

The king was surprised at this. He asked the monk, "What sort of help do you expect from me?"

"O King," the monk replied, "I am trying to attain certain supernatural power. In order to succeed in my attempt I must have the help of a very brave man. I cannot think of anyone more brave than you. Hence I need your help."

Stories of Bethal



“What is the nature of the help you expect from me?” the king asked the monk.

“Come to me at the burial-ground on the night before the next New Moon in a dark dress. I shall acquaint you with the nature of the help which I want from you,” the monk replied.

The king agreed to do so and sent the monk away. On the appointed night he dressed himself completely in black, took his sword and found the monk sitting under a banyan tree in the burial-ground.

“O King,” said the monk, “if you go in a southerly direction you will come upon a certain tree by the branch of which you will find the corpse of a man hanging. What all you have to do is not to utter a word but bring the corpse here.”

Vikram went due south till he came to the tree on which the corpse of the man was hanging by a rope round its neck. The king climbed up the tree, cut the cord and threw the corpse on the ground. Suddenly the corpse began to sob as though it was hurt. The king climbed down the tree in surprise and began to feel the corpse to see if it had life in it and it began to laugh.

The king understood that the Evil Spirit, Bethal possessed the corpse and said, “Why do you laugh? Let us go!” No sooner than the king uttered these words the corpse went up on the tree and began to hang by the branch as before.

The king climbed up the tree again, severed the cord, took the corpse on his shoulder and,

without uttering a sound, began to walk back to the burial-ground.

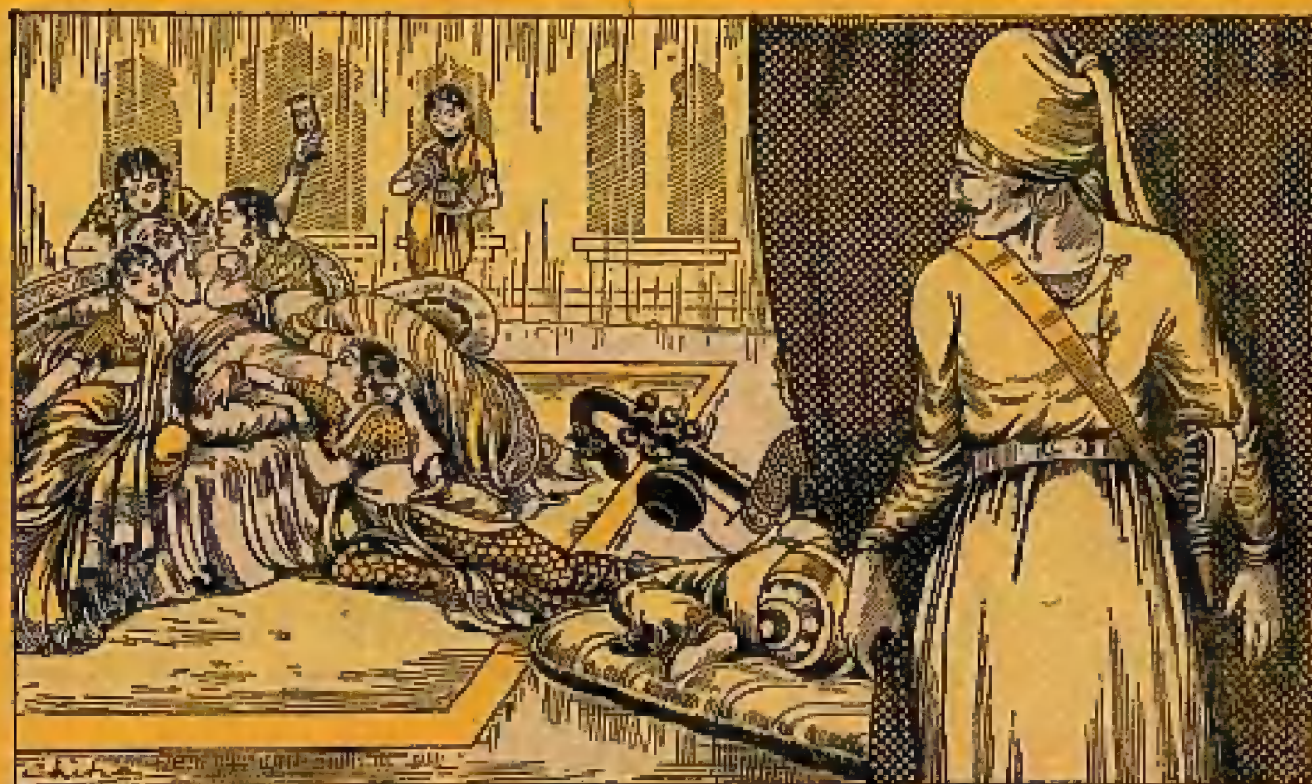
"O king," said Bethal of the corpse, "You are carrying a big load indeed. Let me divert you with a nice tale." He began telling the following story:

Yash-ket was king of Angadesh. He had a very capable minister. Since the king was overfond of luxuries he left the entire responsibility of state to his minister. However much efficiency the minister showed in his administration some enemies

started a rumour that the minister had made the king pleasure-minded in order to rule the land himself.

The minister was greatly pained when he heard such things being said of him. He went to the king and told him, "Your Highness, I have planned to go on a pilgrimage and I request you to take over the administration." The king begged the minister not to go but the minister insisted upon going.

The minister went several places and one day he met a





merchant who traded overseas. "As soon as my ships are loaded I am making a voyage to the Isle of Gold," the merchant informed the minister, adding, "I request you to come with me." Having never gone on the sea the minister agreed.

On their return journey from the Isle of Gold the minister one day saw a huge tree standing in mid-ocean. An extremely attractive lady was sitting in the tree and playing upon the *bin*. Even while the minister was watching it the vision faded away.

The minister talked about this wonder to the sailors who replied, "We see this vision around here every time we come this way."

In course of time the minister returned back to Anga-desh. And was the king glad to see him back! Since the minister's departure the poor king knew not a moment's respite from the worries of state. He could now leave all the worry to his minister again.

"Well, my good minister," said the king, "What wonders did you come across in your travels?"

"I saw many wonders, indeed," said the minister. "But, O King, they are quite insignificant in comparison with what I saw on my way back from the Isle of Gold." Then he described the vision on the waters and the rare beauty of the lady with the *bin*.

This was enough to excite the king. He wanted to see that beautiful woman for himself. In spite of the minister's protests the king left the entire state in his hands and started on a pilgrim-

age. He reached the sea and before long found a vessel bound for the Isle of Gold. The king made friends with the merchant who owned the vessel and got into it as a passenger. Night and day the king looked for the mysterious vision and finally he saw it one day. On the waters was the tree and in the tree was the lady of unimaginable beauty, playing the *bin*. No sooner than he saw the vision the king jumped into the sea.

When the king touched the bottom of the ocean he was

surprised to see a regular city there. But, however long he wandered about it he never met a soul. The king kept searching till he came to a huge palace. Entering this palace the king came upon the beautiful lady resting on a royal couch.

"Who are you?" the king asked her. "Why are you here all by yourself?"

"O King," the lady replied, "I am a Fairy. My father was very fond of me. He never had his food without me by his side. One day I went to pray to my





goddess and was so immersed in my prayers that it was night before I returned home. My father was angry with me and cursed that I should be confined to this deserted city."

"That is all to the good," said the king. "Let us get married and live here happily. I shall die if you will not be my wife."

"I shall marry you without the least hesitation," said the Fairy. "But you must know that I shall be rid of the curse within a week of my marriage and I shall be free to go to my world and join

my father. After cursing me my father took pity on me and stipulated this condition for my freedom. That was why I went up whenever a ship passed. All these days no one came down to marry me and only today my wish has come true."

"I shall consider myself lucky even if you are my wife for a moment," the king told her.

The Fairy was touched with his love. She took him to a well in the garden and told him, "During this week we spend here never step into this well even by mistake. If you do so you will be on earth at once and I shall be miserable alone without you in this deserted city."

The week passed like a fleeting moment and the time arrived for the king and his bride to part. The Fairy took the king to the well in the garden and bade him a tearful good-bye.

"I shall never forget your love and the happy time I spent with you here. Get into the well and go to your place. Then I shall return to my father," she said.

"Why should we part like this?" the king said. "Come to my place and spend some time and go back to your father later."

"But, my king," the Fairy said, "if I touch earth once I shall cease to be immortal and become an ordinary woman."

The king took her as in a last embrace and jumped into the well with her. The next moment they were on earth and the Fairy was no longer an immortal but an ordinary woman. The king took her to Anga-desh and married her with due pomp. That very night his minister's heart suddenly stopped and he was dead.

Having narrated this story Bethal asked the king, "O King, why did the minister die? Was it because the king returned and interrupted his functions of ruling

the land? Or was it because the king married the beautiful Fairy whom he too saw but couldn't marry? If you know the answer and still do not speak, your head will be split into a thousand pieces."

"Both of the reasons you mention for the demise of the minister are quite wrong," Vikram replied. "Even when the king was immersed in earthly pleasures the minister had to suffer odium at the hands of scandal-mongers. Imagine what the minister had to face if a divine beauty was added to the pleasures of the king. It was only this prospect that broke the heart of the minister."

Since the king's silence was broken Bethal returned to the tree with the corpse.





A CLEVER HINT

IN a certain kingdom there was a king. No doubt the king was a good man but rogues surrounded him and concealed his goodness.

To this kingdom a young man called Prasanga arrived with two companions, seeking his own livelihood as well as that of his companions. They got jobs and started doing them. But days passed on and nobody told them what they were to be paid and when. On certain days the king was in the habit of distributing gifts to his servants. These three were excluded even from such occasional gifts.

They had food along with the other employees of the palace and they did whatever they were

asked to do. Yet no one seemed to be aware of their employment.

"At this rate we can never earn or save a pie, never marry, never set up a family!" Prasanga's companions complained.

"Patience, friends. The king is kind. See how he distributes gifts to everyone. What all we have to do is go to him direct and tell him how things stand with us," Prasanga suggested.

But this was easier said than done. For, when they attempted to see the king in his palace, the king's guards chased them away. Then they made an effort to see the king at court. They were again chased away.

Prasanga and his companions narrated their sad tale to many



an official at the court. But it did not yield any result.

Five years went by.

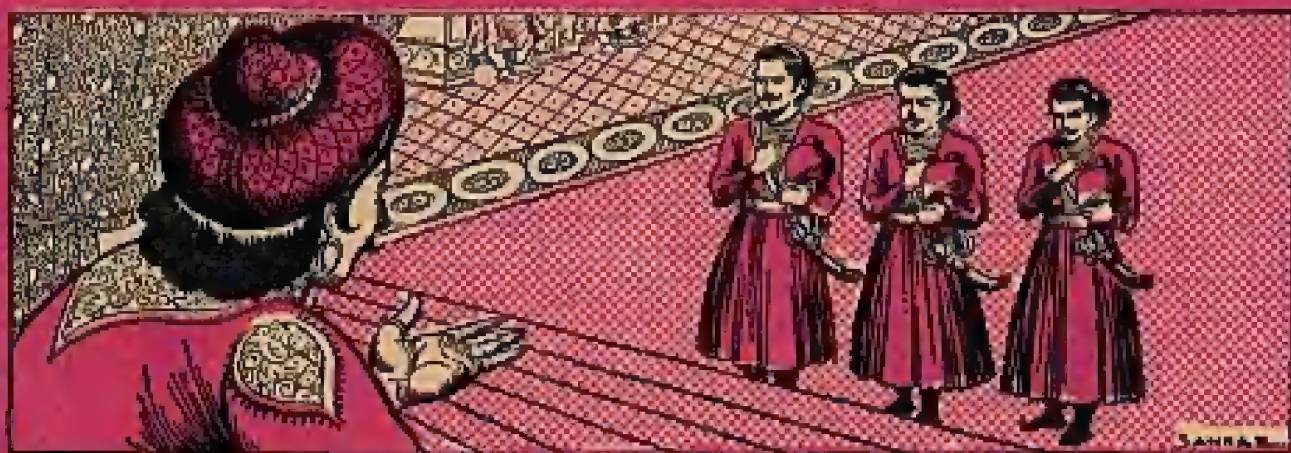
After a long, long time the queen gave birth to a male child. At last the Heir Apparent was born, they said. The entire city was decorated and the event was celebrated on a large scale. There was the usual round of gifts—now on a much bigger scale. Only, Prasanga and his friends got nothing.

Unfortunately the Heir Apparent breathed his last on the third day of his birth. No one would care to bemoan the death of a three-days old brat. But there was a show of condolence. While the bereaved king sat in a corner of his palace everyone was permitted to approach him, condole

him appropriately and depart. Prasanga and his companions also went into the king's presence. Then they began to beat their breasts and cry loudly:

“Ah cruel prince! What have you done to us! How we hoped that you would grow up and sit on the throne some day and inquire into our miserable state and arrange some salary and allowance for us and relieve us of this drudgery! How we waited for you for five years! Is it just that you shatter all our hopes? Who will now care for us? Who will now listen to our sorry tale?”

The king was surprised at their words. He called Prasanga and his companions to him and learnt their story. He at once arranged their salaries and allowances.





Hideous Poverty

VERY early one morning King Bhoja went for a walk along the quiet streets of his capital, Dhara, towards the temple of Lord Shiva. He saw two Brahmans sleeping on the pial of the temple. One of them was quite a youth while the other was somewhat advanced in age.

Even as the king was looking at them the aged man woke up, saw the youth and woke him up saying, "Who are you, son? Are you asleep or awake?"

"My respects to you, sir," said the youth sitting up. "I arrived here very late last night and saw you sleeping. Glad of company I too lay down and went to sleep. I was sleeping when you woke me up."

"What is your name, son? Where do you come from?" the aged man asked the youth.

"They call me Bhaskar," replied the youth. "I come from the banks of the river Prabhavati in the West. I heard that King Bhoja was a very generous person. I am a stranger here."

"Don't worry, son," the elder said. "I too came to see King Bhoja. My name is Sakalya and I am a poet from the South. You appear to have suffered greatly."

"Suffering indeed," said Bhasker and he recited the following verse:

सुतु क्षामा दिशशवः शवा इव मृशं मन्दाशया
बान्धवाः

लिप्ता जर्जर, घर्घरी जतुलवैर्नोमां तथा बाधते,

गेहिन्या गृहितांशुकम् घटयितुं कृत्वा सकाकुम्भितम्
कुम्भन्ती प्रतिवेष्ट्मलोक गृहिणी सुखी यथायाचिता ।

(The children are like corpses tortured by hunger. The relatives have no pity. All the utensils are broken. But all this does not pain me so much as the contemptuous anger of my neighbour's wife when my own woman approached her with a shameful smile begging for the loan of a needle to patch her torn clothes.)

King Bhoja who was listening to this from behind a pillar was quite horrified and pained. Removing all the ornaments on his body he came forward and offered them to the youth saying, "My dear young man, take these and return to your home at once. Do something to your wife and children for heaven's sake."

Poet Sakalya was so touched with the generosity of King Bhoja that he recited the following verse in praise of him on the spot:

अभ्युद्धता बहुमती, दलितोरि वर्गः
कोडीकृता धलवता बलिराज लक्ष्मीः
एकत्र जन्मनि कृतं यदनेन यूना
जन्मत्रये त दकरोत् पुरुषः पुराणः ।

(God had to incarnate himself three different times to rescue the Earth (as *Varaha*), to root out his enemies (as *Parasuram*) and to snatch the wealth of the rich (as *Vaman*). But King Bhoja did all the three things in one incarnation and that too while he was still a youth.)

King Bhoja who was often called an incarnation was quite flattered with the compliment and made a gift of three lakhs to poet Sakalya.



THE NAUGHTY CRACKER





The Exchange

IN Suraj-pur there lived a very very rich man called Daulat-Ram. He had a son. Both father and son were such great misers that they kept the goddess of wealth under lock and key and lived like very very poor people, eating the cheapest food and wearing the cheapest clothes.

It so happened that a group of bandits began to loot the surrounding villages. They killed several rich men and set fire to their houses. This news spread far and wide.

These bandits might fall upon Suraj-pur any day. So Daulat-Ram and his son thought of a plan to save their wealth.

"Let us take all our wealth at night to the burial-ground, bury

it in a recognisable spot and come back home while it is still dark," said the father to his son. The son agreed.

That very night they took their bags of wealth as well as a pick and a spade and made for the burial-ground.

Now, in this very town there was a very very poor man. He had no home. He wore rags for clothes. He never had a square meal and so he was thin and starved. He searched for work all day and went begging for food from door to door after dark. He ate what he got and slept on the pavements.

This night the beggar could not close his eyes because he had nothing to eat and the cruel



pangs of hunger kept him awake. He saw two men pass along the street. They had bags on their shoulders and they were walking on tiptoe without making the slightest sound. The beggar suspected that they were up to something and he began to follow them at a distance.

In one corner of the burial-ground the misers lowered their bags. The father began to dig a pit with the help of the pick. The beggar crawled along the ground like a lizard and began to watch from behind a tree.

All of a sudden Daulat-Ram stopped digging, looked up and said to his son, "That thing near the tree looks like a man's head. Do you see it?"

While the son came forward to investigate the beggar closed his eyes and made his body rigid like that of a corpse.

Daulat-Ram's son was convinced that it was only a corpse since the beggar was more emaciated than some corpses. Still, to be on the safe side, he took out a knife and cut one of the ears of the beggar. The beggar bore the pain and never uttered the slightest sound.

"It's only a neglected corpse," the son told Daulat-Ram. "I cut off its ear to make sure and here it is."

"Let me too test it. Give the knife here," said Daulat-Ram. He too was certain that it was only a corpse. But, to be on the safe side, he tested it by cutting off its nose and was satisfied.

They finished the hole in the ground, buried the bags and covered it up again, made a note

of its location and went home. Then the beggar got up, uncovered the hole, removed the bags and took them away after filling the hole again. He took shelter in a poor hut until his ear and nose healed. Then he went out and got himself some decent clothes. Then he changed his name, bought a big house and began to live like a rich man.

In the meantime the bandits were put down. People from several villages organised themselves into fighting bands and encircled the bandits. All the rascals were caught with their loot and were handed over to the king's soldiers.

"Now we have nothing to fear," said Daulat-Ram to his son. "Let us go to the burial-ground and bring back our treasure." But when they went there the goddess of wealth was gone. Like fools they dug everywhere till daybreak before they fully realised that their wealth was stolen.

"That thing which we took for a corpse must have been a



live man after all", said Daulat-Ram. "As soon as our backs were turned he made away with our treasure."

"In that case," said the son thoughtfully, "there is a rich man somewhere who has one ear and nose missing."

"You said it!" said the father. "Go into the city and find out if any new rich man has taken his residence. If he also lacks an ear and a nose he is our man!"

After careful inquiries such a man was found in a certain

street. He was new, he was rich, he was short of one ear and nose.

Daulat-Ram at once went to the king with his son and filed a charge against the rich man accusing him of having robbed his wealth. The king summoned the plaintiffs as well as the defendant to the court and went into the case.

"Your Highness," Daulat-Ram deposed before the king. "For fear of bandits we buried all we had in the burial-ground. This man followed us like a thief and looted our wealth with which he is now living luxuriously. We want justice!"

"Is it a fact that you saw them bury their treasure and dug it up?" the king asked the defendant.

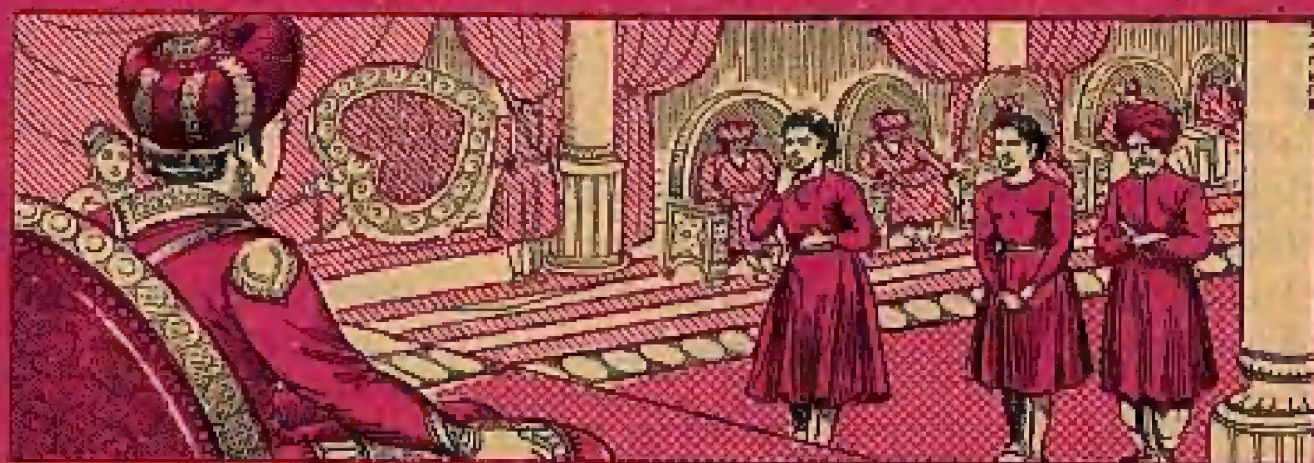
"That is quite true, Your Highness," the ex-beggar said.

"In that case return to them what you took from them," the king told him.

"Your Highness, I am no thief. I shall return to them what I took from them *if they return to me what they took from me*. I exchanged my nose and ear for their bags of wealth."

To prove what he said the ex-beggar showed the king his missing ear and nose.

Then the full story was narrated in the court and, having heard it, the king said, "This man is innocent. He has paid for the wealth more than anybody could have paid. Let the plaintiffs give him back his ear and nose before asking him for their money."





FALSE FRIEND

IN the city of Alexandria there was a dyer called Abu Keer. He was a good workman but at the same time he was very lazy and deceitful. If anyone gave him clothes for dying he sold them and spent the money on food. After evading the customers as long as he could he told them in the end that his shop was looted.

In course of time several people realised what sort of man Abu Keer was. If still some strangers entrusted him with cloth for dying Abu Keer continued to deceive them too. At last he stopped opening his shop every day. Instead, he sat in the barber's shop opposite all the time and watched the persons

who came to his shop. If they were old customers who came for their cloth he allowed them to see that the shop was closed and go away. If they were new customers who brought cloth for dying he went out of the barber's shop, took the cloth, sold it and bought what all food he could with the money.

This could not go on forever. One day Abu Keer saw from the barber's shop that the Government officials sealed the shop because his creditors brought attachment to his property.

The barber was a gentle and good-natured man called Abu Seer. "How long can you run your trade through swindling?" Abu Seer told Abu Keer. "Why

DEVIDAYAL VARMA



can't you be content with what Allah is willing to give?"

"What can I do?" Abu Keer said. "I work all day and still cannot make enough to have a good meal. You make enough money in your profession. So you can afford to be honest."

"You are quite mistaken," said Abu Seer. "I make very little money. I think we can live better if we leave this city and go somewhere else."

The dyer agreed to do this. They both swore that they should support each other if one of them

was unemployed and that they should share their earnings equally if one earned more and the other less.

The next morning they went to the river and got into a boat. The little food they took with them was soon spent and the barber went among the passengers, shaved them and accepted food from them in payment. A few people gave him both food and money.

Abu Seer was the only barber on the boat and the captain of the boat heard about him and sent for him. After getting shaved the captain offered the barber money. But Abu Seer refused it and told him their story.

"That is all right," said the captain. "You and your friend can dine with me. When it is time for dinner come to my room with him."

Abu Seer thanked the captain and, making a bundle of all the food he got from the other passengers, went to the dyer who lay down and slept the moment he got on to the boat. He woke up

only to eat. When the barber woke him the dyer said, "Do not mistake me, brother. I am so giddy that I cannot even stand up." He then began to gobble up the food brought by the barber.

"Why do you eat this food? The captain of the boat has invited both of us for a feast. It is almost dinner hour now," said the barber.

"Ah, how can I come?" said the dyer. "I cannot even stand up." He went on eating till he was full.

"But where is your friend?" the captain asked the barber, when he went alone to dine with him.

"My friend is suffering from an attack of sea-sickness," replied the barber. When they had their meal the captain heaped a lot of food-stuffs on a plate and sent them along with the barber for his friend.

The dyer woke up, ate all the stuff sent to him by the captain and again went to sleep. After sailing the open sea for three weeks the boat reached a city.





Both the friends got out of the boat and went into the city. They hired for themselves a room at a serai and promptly the dyer lay down to sleep. He went on sleeping night and day, only waking up to eat.

The barber, on the other hand, went out every day, plied his trade and came home with vegetables and other food-stuffs. He prepared a meal for himself and his friend, woke him up and fed him. He never once accused his friend of being lazy. The barber used to go out often to see the

sights of the city and at such times he used to tell his friend, "I am going out. You had better rest properly."

Forty days went by and then the barber fell ill. He gave some money to the watchman of the serai and requested him to get some food from outside. Abu Keer still continued to sleep and eat.

On the fifth day the barber was unconscious with high fever and he could not send the watchman for food. Abu Keer began to feel the pangs of hunger. He got up and searched Abu Seer's shirt in the pockets of which he found some money. Abu Keer took it and slipped out into the city like a thief.

It was a very fine city but Abu Keer saw a strange thing. The people in the streets were wearing either white clothes or clothes dyed blue. No other colour was to be seen. In order to find out the reason for this Abu Keer went into a dying shop and asked that his kerchief should be dyed. "What colour will you give me?"

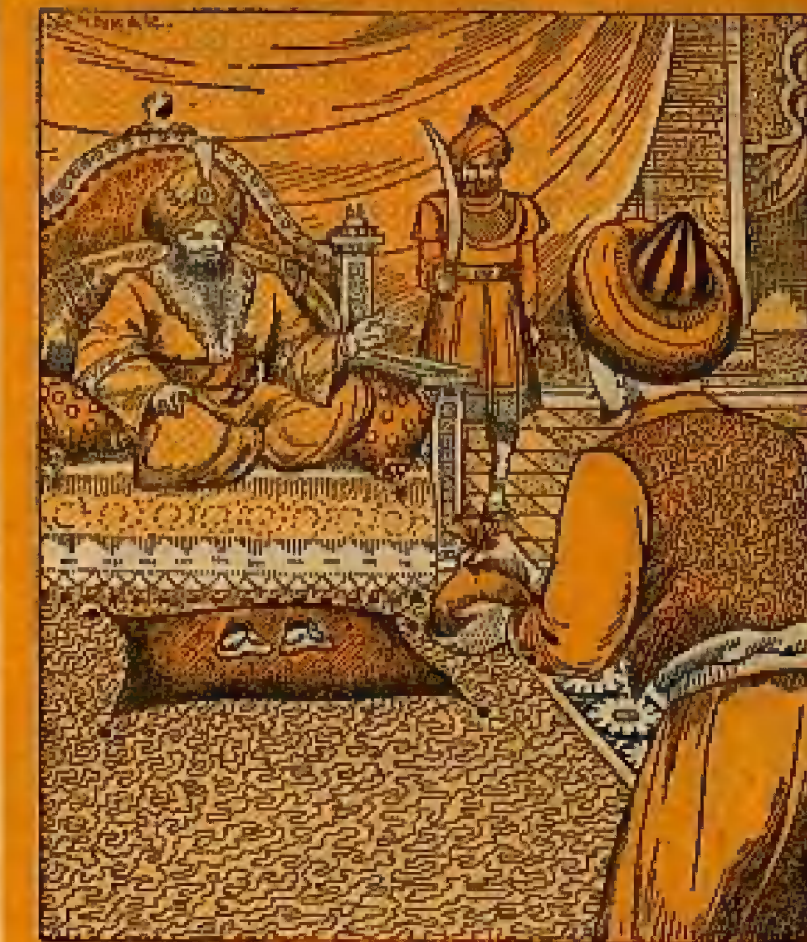
What will you charge me?" he asked the shopman.

"I shall dye it blue, of course," said the shopman. "It will cost you twenty silver pieces."

Abu Keer engaged the man in conversation and found out several things. The blue dye was abundantly available in the town and it was dead cheap. All the dyers used only blue. They knew no other dye. There were only forty dyers in the entire city but they were so well united that they made it impossible for anyone else to start a dying shop or compete with them.

Having learnt these facts, Abu Keer went to the king and told him that he could dye clothes in all colours. He requested to be permitted to open a dying shop in the city.

The king was surprised that anyone could dye clothes in all colours. He not only granted permission to Abu Keer to open a dying shop but he even advanced him five thousand gold pieces for this purpose and made a further gift of some slaves to



work for him. A house was set apart for this purpose.

Abu Keer bought what all was necessary to start a first class dying establishment and set himself up as a master dyer. To start with the king sent him several pieces of cloth. Abu Keer dyed all of them in various colours and displayed them in his shop-front. Crowds gathered to see this wonder and Abu Keer had all the publicity he wanted.

The king was very much satisfied with Abu Keer's efforts and the gates of fortune opened wide



for the new master dyer. All the nobles and officials of the court had their clothes dyed by him and paid him very well. In a very short time Abu Keer was not only a rich man but also a powerful man in the city.

Meanwhile, at the serai, Abu Seer lay unconscious for full three days. The watchman wondered why he was not sent for all these days and came to see him on the fourth day. Abu Seer who was now conscious requested the watchman to take some money from his shirt-

pocket and bring him something to drink.

But the shirt-pocket was empty. The watchman said that he did not know what happened to Abu Keer. It was clear that Abu Keer swindled his friend and went away. Abu Seer began to shed tears. The watchman consoled him and prepared some hot gruel for him. He went on nursing Abu Seer at his own cost till one day the sickman had profuse perspiration all over the body and was rid of the disease. He thanked the watchman for his help and bade him goodbye, saying that he would repay him when Allah should decide to help him.

The barber did not go very far along the street when he came across a huge dying factory with festoons of cloth dyed in several colours in front of it and a large crowd of people admiring them. When he learnt that the establishment belonged to Abu Keer he was very happy. He was now sure that Abu Keer did not come to see him due to pressure of work.

Abu Seer peeped inside the shop and saw his friend surrounded with a lot of glory and luxury. But Abu Keer did not jump with joy on seeing the barber. On the other hand he shouted in rage, "You are again here, you wretch? How many times did I tell you not to show your face here, you robber?"

The next moment some slaves came and caught hold of the unfortunate barber and Abu Keer came out and thrashed Abu Seer with his stick as though he were a dog. "Never dare to

show your face here again," he warned Abu Seer, "Or I shall report to the king and get you beheaded."

Abu Seer did not know what to make of this except that Allah was putting him to a test. He had only one strong desire and that was to have a good bath. He wandered all over the city for hours and hours but saw not even one hammam.

"Good friend," Abu Seer said to a passer-by, "Can you show me the way to the nearest hammam?"





"Hammam?" said the man puzzled. "What is a hammam?"

"It is a public bathing house where people can have a clean and fresh bath," the barber said.

"Whether it is the king or the people, if any one wants a bath, he must go only to the sea," the other said.

It was clear to Abu Seer that the people of this city never knew the luxury of a clean and fresh bath. He went to the king and said, "This is such a fine city but it is a very great pity that there are no hammams in it."

When he explained to the king how a hammam is organised and run the king said, "Fine! I shall give you as much money as you want. Choose your own place and build a good hammam. Run it yourself and I shall see if it will be really as good as you describe it."

With the support of the king Abu Seer built a lovely hammam in the centre of the town. He made arrangements for storing water and heating it. He arranged a beautiful fountain in the centre of the hammam. The king made him a gift of some slaves and the barber taught them how to massage and attend upon the bathers.

On the opening day the king and the other nobles and officers of the court came to bathe. Abu Seer had the bathing water scented with rose water. All the bathers were massaged well, had their bodies rubbed and bathed. They never knew that bathing could be such a luxury.

The king paid Abu Seer a thousand gold pieces and the

rest of the bathers a hundred each. On the very first day Abu Seer made a small fortune.

From the next day onwards the baths were open to the public. People flocked to the hammam to have a real nice bath. Abu Seer took whatever the bathers paid since he wanted even the poorest people to afford a bath at his hammam.

One day the queen sent word that she was coming to have a bath at the hammam. Abu Seer stopped all male bathers and brought in female slaves to attend upon the queen and her maids. He arranged special incense and toilet preparations. When the queen came the female slaves gave her such a luxurious bath and fine toilet that she was very much pleased with the hammam.

Another time the captain of the king's ships came to have a bath. He recognised Abu Seer and, after the bath, wanted to pay for it. But Abu Seer refused to take any money from the captain to whom he was already indebted. The captain was so



pleased with the barber and his nice manners that he was anxious to do him a good turn when an opportunity came.

Soon Abu Keer, the dyer, came to hear of the hammam and the barber's fame. It was a long time since he had a proper bath. So, one day, he came to the hammam followed by his numberless slaves. Abu Seer came out to receive him in person and embraced him.

"Brother," said Abu Keer in a very affectionate manner, "we swore that we would stand by



each other. Then, how is it that you did not come even once to see me?"

"I did come, brother," said Abu Seer. "But you received me with a stick and called me a thief."

"Was it you that I chastised? What a shame!" Abu Keer exclaimed. "A rogue who resembled you came daily to my shop and stole something or other. After all he was a poor beggar and several times I let him off with warnings. In the end I was so exasperated that I thrashed

him. I never suspected that it was you."

"No, no! I came to your shop only once and you had me beaten," Abu Seer said.

"Good heavens!" said Abu Keer. "Why didn't you tell me that it was you?"

"Oh, it was fated to happen and we need not worry about it now," Abu Seer replied. He told his friend how he came to run the hammam and then gave him an excellent bath.

"The bath is excellent," said Abu Keer, "but for one defect."

"What is it?" asked Abu Seer anxiously.

"Why did you not provide the bathers with the depilatory paste made up of white arsenic and lime?" Abu Keer asked him.

"Ah, my friend!" said Abu Seer. "It slipped my mind. I shall introduce it tomorrow only. Thank you for the suggestion."

From the hammam Abu Keer went straight to the king and told him, "Your Highness, it is my duty to warn you of danger. You had built an excellent

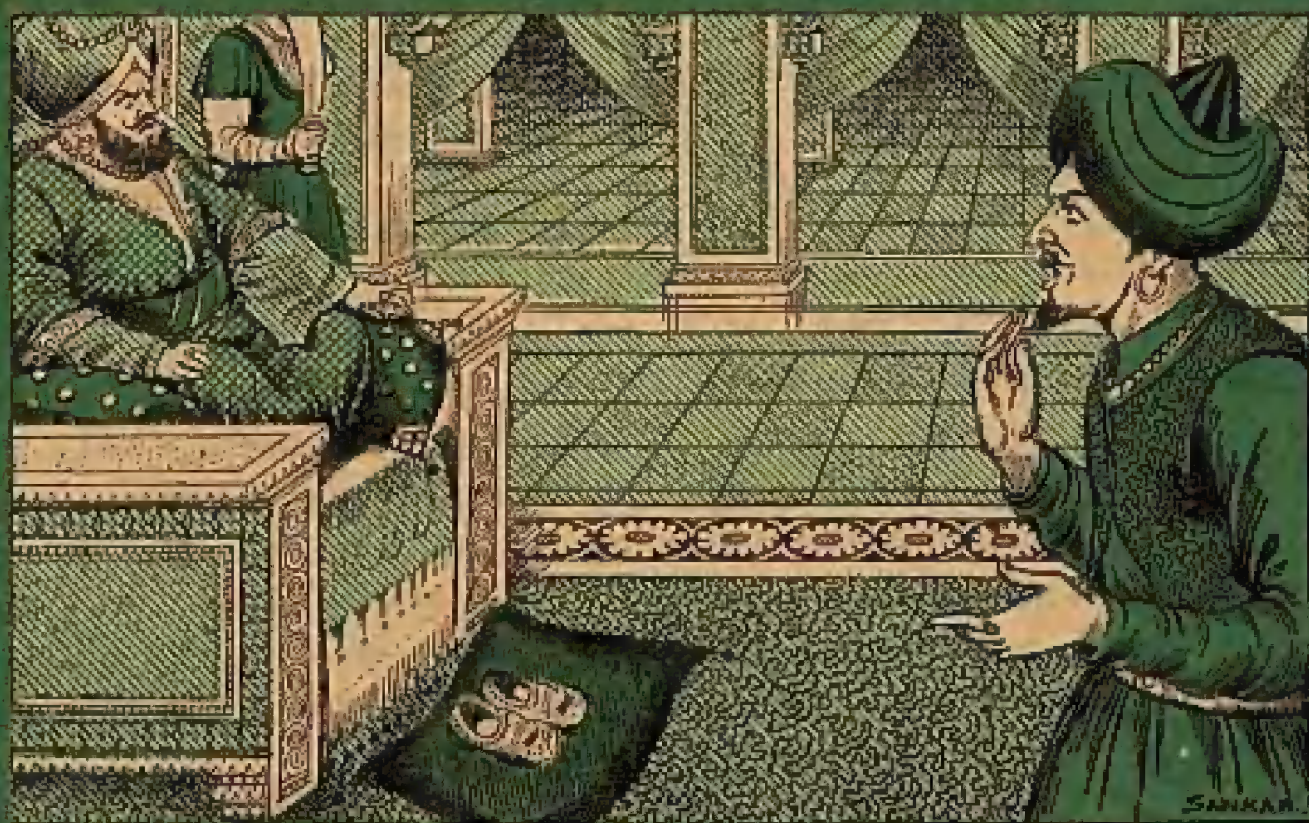
hammam and it deserves all praise. But the man to whom you have entrusted it means you harm. There cannot be any doubt that he planned this hammam only to poison you. You will know it yourself when you learn his story.

"Myself and this man once happened to become prisoners of a certain Sultan. I obtained my freedom by pleasing the Sultan with my capacity to dye clothes in various colours. But this barber could not get his freedom or that of his wife and children

by any means. In the end the Sultan set him free on condition that he came to your kingdom, started a hammam and destroyed you with paste of deadly poison. When he finishes his job he will be able to get his wife and children freed and the Sultan will occupy your kingdom."

"Paste of poison?" said the king. "Abu Seer never applied it to my body."

"That is why Your Highness is still hale and healthy," replied Abu Keer. "Someday he is bound to apply the death-paste





containing white arsenic. He may say it is a depilatory. I've warned Your Highness out of anxiety for your safety. It is better to be on your guard!"

Having poisoned the king's mind Abu Keer left. The king's regard for the barber was turned to seething rage. The very next day he went to the hammam with his slaves. Abu Seer welcomed him with great respect. He massaged the king himself and then brought some paste to apply to the king's body. Here was the poison Abu Keer spoke of!

"What is that?" the king asked him sharply.

"It is a depilatory paste," Abu Seer replied.

The king smelt the paste and found it to contain arsenic poison. He got up in a rage and shouted to his men, "Bind this traitor hand and foot and take him to the court." He put on his clothes and departed from the hammam without having his bath.

When Abu Seer was taken to the court the king was talking to the captain of his ships. "Take this scoundrel with you," the king told the captain, "put him in a gunny sack along with limestone, tie up the sack and throw it into the sea so that he will die a horrible death, cooked in lime."

The captain could say nothing except, "Yes, Your Highness." But while taking Abu Seer home with him he asked him, "What did you do to make the king so angry with you? I thought you were a very good man."

"I did nothing. But for nothing the king would not punish me. He loved me a lot," said Abu Seer.

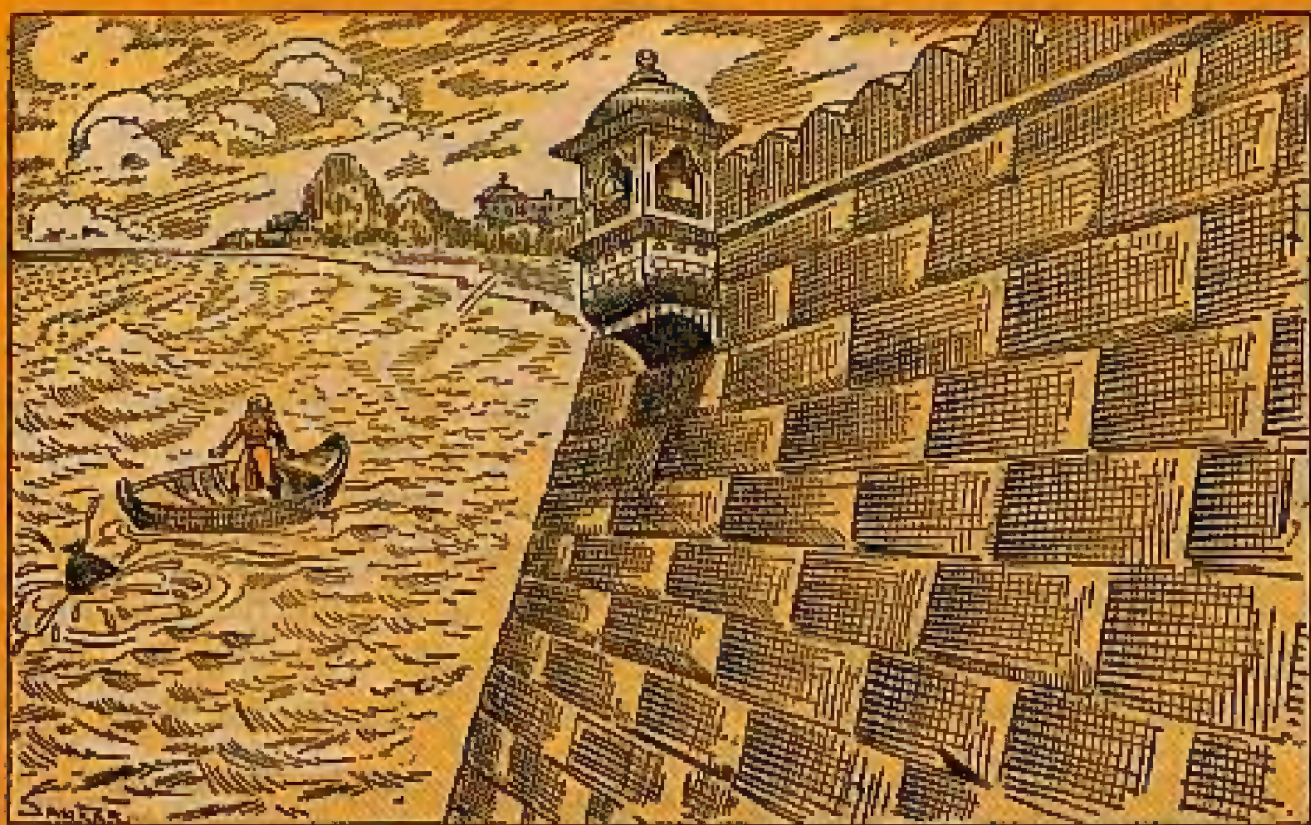
"In any case, I cannot put you to such a horrible death. Take a net and go to the island in the sea. Stay there fishing till dark. The king's cook will be coming for fish after dark. Meanwhile I shall put a log of wood in the sack and throw it into the sea. We can learn the truth later," the captain told Abu Seer.

The barber took a fishing net and departed for the island and the captain put a log of wood and two maunds of limestone in a sack and tied it up. He put the sack in a small boat and

rowed towards the palace. At the top window the king was sitting. He waved his hand indicating that the sack should be thrown into the water. When he did so something flashed in the air and fell into the water.

The captain threw the sack in the water and hot bubbles and steam rose up.

Meanwhile, Abu Seer caught a lot of fish till evening. He was very hungry, having had nothing to eat since morning. So, he wanted to roast a fish and eat it before starting. He chose a big





fish and cut it open with his knife. Inside it he found something sparkling and took it out. At once he knew it was the king's signet ring!

"Allah alone knows all things!" thought Abu Seer. For, it was impossible for him to guess how a fish should swallow the king's signet ring, then fall into his net and then again be picked up by him for his lunch.

He went to the captain's house, showed him the ring and said, "This must be restored to the king at once. Without it he will

be badly handicapped. I am going to hand it over to him."

The captain was frightened because if the king saw Abu Seer, he would know that the captain did not carry out his order.

"Do not worry," Abu Seer advised the captain, "Allah sees everything. At least I shall be able to know from the king what my fault was."

The king was amazed to see Abu Seer. "How did you escape from the sack?" he asked.

Abu Seer told the king all that had happened and handed over the signet ring to him.

The king was touched at the barber's sense of duty. "You appear to be a good man, a faithful man," the king said. "How is it that you attempted to kill me?"

"I never made any such attempt, Your Highness," Abu Seer replied. "Somebody poisoned your mind against me."

"It was none other than Abu Keer, the dyer," the king said. "It appears that your wife and children are imprisoned by some

Sultan and you have undertaken to poison me in order to get them free. I have found out that you put white arsenic in the paste which you wanted to apply to my body. Do you deny it?"

Abu Seer was astounded and speechless for some time. Then he said, "I've done my best to Abu Keer. I never did him the least harm. Yet he stole my money, had me beaten without reason and then planned to get me put to death! He came to the hammam like a friend, appreciated all the arrangements except the lack of depilatory paste. He then went to you and complained that I was going to kill you. What is one to think of such a false friend?"

"You say it is not poison?" the king asked.

"No, Your Highness. It's quite harmless. In our country everyone uses it. Only, it slipped my mind until that man brought it to my notice," said Abu Seer.

"Tell me all the mischief he did to you, so that I can punish him," the king said.



Abu Seer related to the king what all had happened. The king sent for the watchman of the serai and the slaves of the dyer. The watchman recognised Abu Seer and told the king how his friend went away with all the money of Abu Seer when he was unconscious with fever. Abu Keer's slaves confessed that they had once thrashed Abu Seer at the command of their master.

The king at once ordered the arrest of Abu Keer who was brought bound hand and foot. On seeing him, the watchman

of the serai said, "Yes, this was the fine gentleman who slept all the time and woke up only to have his food and who-stole the money of this man when he was laid up with fever."

Every word of Abu Seer's statement was proved true even as Abu Keer's guilt was fully established.

"Tie up this man in a sack of lime stone and throw him in the sea!" the king ordered his servants.

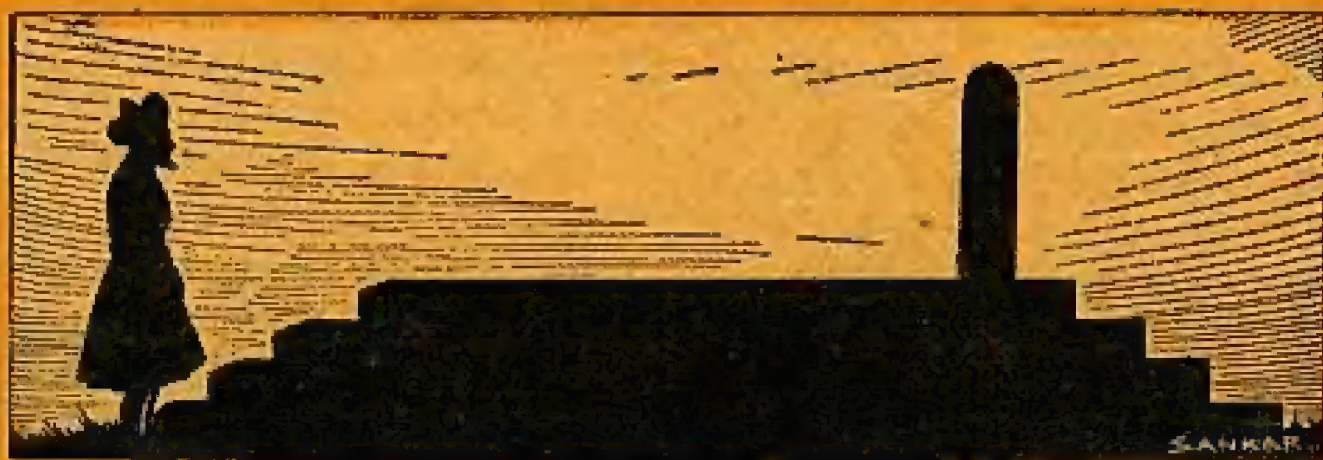
Abu Seer begged the king to pardon his old friend but the king said, "Even if you forgive him for what he did to you, I am not going to forgive him for what he did to me."

Abu Keer was tied up in a sack of limestone and thrown

into the sea according to the king's order. He died a horrible but well-deserved death.

Later, when the king sent for Abu Seer and asked him, "What can I do for you?" Abu Seer replied, "Let me go back to my country. I do not feel happy here any more."

The king heaped all sorts of gifts upon Abu Seer and arranged a ship for him to go to Alexandria. While going on the boat, one day, Abu Seer saw a sack floating on the water. He got it hauled into the boat, opened it and found the remains of his faithless friend Abu Keer in it. He took the corpse to Alexandria, buried it there and had a handsome tomb built over it. The false friend was still a friend.





Bhim the Shepherd

IN a certain country there was a shepherd named Ram. One day, while grazing his sheep in the meadow, Ram found a newborn babe under a tree. Being childless Ram took care of the babe, fed it with the milk of an ewe and took it home.

From then on the ewe became the child's mother and the child thrived well on her milk. It grew up so amazingly that Ram named it Bhim. The boy lived up to his name. Even at the age of seven he could pull out medium-sized trees without effort.

Ram was glad that his foster-son was going to have a bright

future instead of tending sheep all his life. When Bhim was fourteen Ram said to him, "Son, your fame has already spread a hundred miles. Why should you waste your time going behind sheep? Visit various countries and make for yourself a name, earn wealth and be happy."

So Bhim started on a tour of the world. He went to several cities and defeated several strong men. The name of Bhim the Shepherd spread very far and wide.

Some time elapsed. One day, while passing through a jungle on the outskirts of a town, Bhim the Shepherd saw a strange

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person tearing up trees with his bare hands.

"What are you doing that for, brother?" Bhim asked the tree-tearer.

"Bhim the Shepherd is coming. I am keeping myself in form to defeat him," the tree-tearer replied.

"Is that so?" said Bhim. "I am Bhim the Shepherd. Let us see you defeat me!"

Then they started wrestling. Bhim tried to catch the other man by the waist and pull him down. But the other avoided

his grasp and ran apart. Then he dashed forward with the intention of kicking Bhim in his chest with both his feet. However, Bhim caught him by the feet and swinging him round threw him away. As they fought in this manner the earth shook like a jelly.

At last Bhim managed to grip his rival by the waist and dashed him to the ground with such force that the tree-tearer was stuck in the earth up to his knees. However, he quickly came up and, seizing Bhim, dashed him to



the ground. Bhim got stuck in the earth up to his waist. Then Bhim got very wild. He jumped up and, catching hold of the tree-tearer with all his might dashed him to the ground. The tree-tearer got stuck in the earth up to his neck. He could not come up and accepted defeat. Bhim pulled him up and, at his request, allowed him to become his disciple and accompany him.

They travelled together for some time till they reached a rocky place where they saw a queer person picking up huge

stones and crumbling them in his bare hands.

"Brother," said Bhim, "What are you doing that for?"

"Bhim the Shepherd is coming. I am keeping myself in trim to defeat him," the stone-crusher replied.

"Is that so?" said Bhim. "I am Bhim the Shepherd. Let us see you defeat me."

They began to wrestle and in a short time the stone-crusher, got stuck in the ground up to his neck, begged for mercy and wished to follow Bhim.





The three of them wandered together for a very long time. Then they came across a queer man in a certain town. This man was taking lumps of iron and kneading them like dough in his bare hands.

"What are you doing this for, brother?" asked Bhim.

"Bhim the Shepherd is coming. I am keeping myself fit in order to defeat him," the iron-kneader replied.

"I am Bhim the Shepherd," said Bhim, "Let us see you defeat me."

They fought until Bhim dashed the iron-kneader neck-deep into the ground. Then the iron-kneader too begged for mercy and offered to follow Bhim as a disciple.

With his three disciples Bhim toured many places until they came to an extensive forest. The first day Bhim asked the tree-tearer to cook food for all and went ahunting into the forest with his other disciples. While the tree-tearer was busy with his cooking a very tiny dwarf appeared and said, "Sir, I'm hungry. Will you give me some food?"

"Nothing doing," said the tree-tearer. "Get out of here."

But the dwarf did not go away. He sat at a distance till the cooking was finished. Then he came behind the tree-tearer, pulled him flat on the ground and sat on his chest. While the dwarf went on eating the food the tree-tearer could do nothing about it. After finishing off all the food the dwarf calmly got up and walked away.

The tree-tearer was terribly ashamed that he was defeated by a dwarf. He could not tell his companions what had happened. So he began to prepare another meal hastily. But before the meal was ready his companions returned from the hunt.

"You have not yet finished cooking?" Bhim asked the tree-tearer. "You don't seem to know how to cook."

At the next stopping Bhim asked the stone-crusher to stay behind and prepare dinner while he went with the others to hunt in the forest. Again the dwarf arrived, put the stone-crusher to shame and, having eaten the entire food, went his way. The stone-crusher too was obliged to cook afresh and the others returned from the hunt before the food was ready.

Bhim was dissatisfied with the stone-crusher too. The third day he asked the iron-kneader to cook food while he went a-hunting with the others. But the iron-kneader fared no better than the others. The dwarf



overpowered him and went away, having eaten all the food.

Bhim was surprised to see that the iron-kneader was still preparing the food when he returned. Only the other disciples knew the cause for the delay.

On the fourth day, however, Bhim stayed behind to cook food while the others went to hunt. He suspected that there was something the others were hiding from him. He wanted to find out what it was. Just as he was finishing cooking the dwarf came and asked for food. Bhim

lifted the cooking pot very high and said to the dwarf, "Get going. I am giving you no food." The dwarf tried to jump up and catch Bhim by his throat. Bhim took the dwarf to a huge tree some distance away and tied him up to its trunk securely.

His disciples returned and found to their surprise that the food was ready.

"You must be ashamed of yourselves," Bhim admonished them. "To think that you let a pigmy fool you! Strong men indeed! Finish off your food and

I shall show you what I did to him."

But when Bhim took them to the tree there was no tree there, only a huge hole in the ground. There were marks on the ground indicating that a heavy tree had been dragged along by some one. The four of them followed these marks until they came to a huge chasm where the marks ended. The chasm looked bottomless.

"I must see the end of this affair," Bhim said to his disciples. "Lower me in a basket with the help of ropes."



Bhim went down and down in the basket till at last he touched the bottom. There he saw fine palaces and lovely gardens. Bhim saw a beautiful girl in a garden. She was perturbed on seeing Bhim, and said, "What are you doing here? This is the abode of the King of Serpents. The Twelve-headed Serpent King will not allow you to go back alive, if he happens to see you."

"Let the Serpent King be afraid of meeting me. I am not afraid of him. Anyway, who are you?" Bhim asked her.

"I am a princess. The Serpent King abducted me and my three elder sisters and kept us prisoners here. After the next New Moon he will shed his skin and marry us," the girl replied.

While they were talking the Twelve-headed Serpent King arrived.

"You vain fool! How dare you come here where I am strong?" the Serpent King hissed in anger. "Now your fate is sealed!"

At once the Serpent King flung his coils over Bhim and



began to squeeze him in a ferocious grip. But Bhim made his body and limbs as rigid as steel. Failing to crush Bhim to death the King of Serpents viciously thrust his twelve-headed hood at Bhim in order to bite him with his poisonous fangs. But Bhim caught hold of the hood in his strong arms and kept it away from him. The Serpent King pulled Bhim's hands down with the strength of his coils but the coils did not get a grip. Now Bhim began to dash the hood of the Serpent King against the ground with all his might. Gradually the Serpent King began to lose his consciousness and his coils began to slip down from Bhim.

Sprawling on the ground weakly the Serpent King begged

Bhim to spare him and take him as his disciple.

"Throw your weight around where you are strong. But if you try to come up to our world and behave like a big fellow I shall crush you like a worm! Beware of Bhim the shepherd!" Bhim told the Serpent King.

Then Bhim rescued the four princesses from the Serpent King and was drawn up along with them by his disciples. Bhim married the princess whom he saw in the garden below and his disciples married her sisters. They lived happily at their father-in-law's place.

The Twelve-headed Serpent King was so scared of Bhim the Shepherd that he never dared to show his face again on earth.





BALA-VARDHAN was king of Kari-pur. His queen died after giving birth to a daughter. The king married another wife but he was not blessed with any children by her. He named his daughter Hema and brought her up with the utmost care. Hema got the training that was necessary for the future queen.

Hema was not only well-taught but she was extremely beautiful too. She gladdened the sight of every one except her step-mother who was intensely jealous of her. The king had made several attempts to fix up Hema's marriage, but the queen frustrated them.

One day King Bala-varadhan went a hunting. The queen sent several maids to Hema, begging

her to visit her once. Hema ignored these invitations at first but yielded in the end. In the evening she paid a visit to her step-mother.

The queen pretended to be glad to see Hema and gave her all sorts of things to eat. Hema declined them saying she was not hungry. Then the queen subjected Hema to an elaborate toilet, had flowers arranged in her hair and asked her to try the fragrance of some scent. As soon as Hema inhaled the scent she became unconscious.

The queen got Hema placed in a box and waited till midnight. Then she ordered her servants to throw the box over the fort-wall and into the cremation-ground.

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That very night a young man named Vijay came on a horse from a far-off place towards the cremation-ground at about midnight. In the darkness he saw a hut and thought of spending the rest of the night in it. But when he got down from the horse and went nearer he found three corpses burning on the other side of the hut. At once he knew that the place was a cremation-ground and the hut was put up for the use of mourners. Since Vijay was not a coward he decided to spend the night in the hut.

Soon he heard a thud near-by. Vijay got up, took up a burning stick from one of the pyres and went to investigate the noise. By the light of the stick he saw a long box near the fort-wall. When he opened the lid he saw a very beautiful girl lying unconscious inside the box.

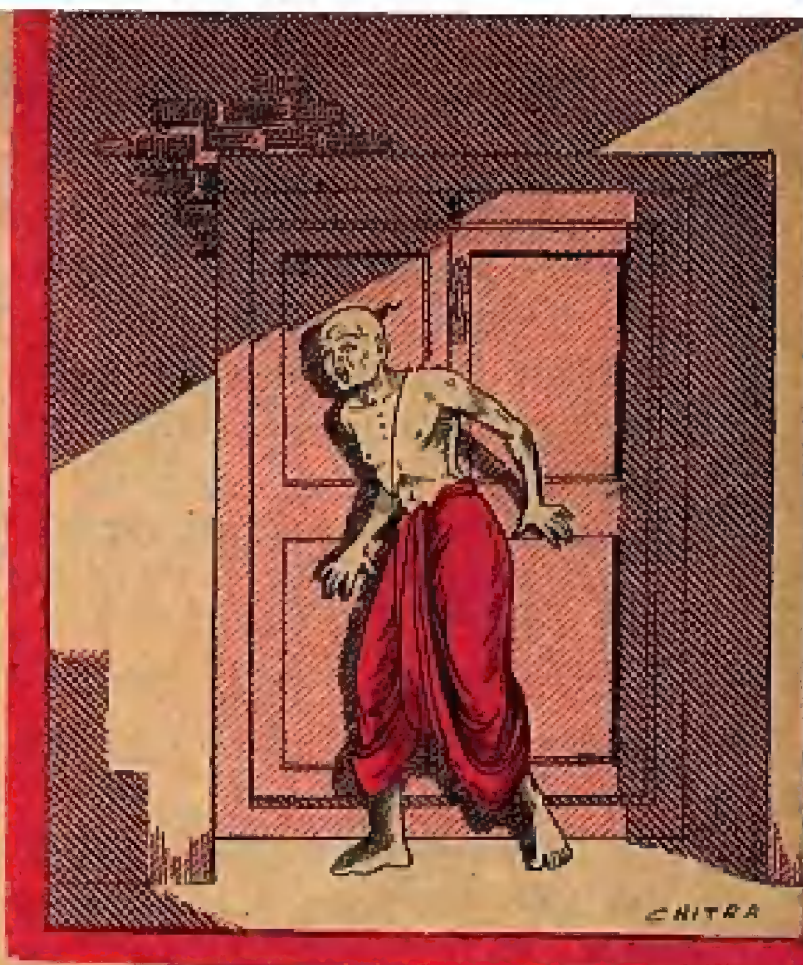
Vijay lifted the girl from the box and carried her to the hut in his arms. All his efforts to revive her were of no avail. He could guess that some enemies made an attempt to kill her. But she was still alive and could be saved. Only, dawn was approaching and he must take her to a safe place before people began to move about.

So, Vijay put her upon his horse and went into the village. There he requested a Brahman for shelter. "Sir," he told the Brahman, "we have come a very long way and my wife had a stroke on the way. Can you please accommodate us in your house until she gets better?"

The Brahman agreed and put a small room at Vijay's disposal.

Vijay attended to her till evening when, as a result of his efforts, Hema revived and opened her eyes. She was surprised to see a stranger attending upon her. Vijay told her what little he knew and Hema informed him what went before he found her in the box. In order to avoid unnecessary questions Vijay had told the Brahman that she was his wife. But Hema accepted Vijay in her mind as her husband, seeing that he devotedly saved her life.

Hema gained back her health soon but a new problem arose for Hema and Vijay. When the king returned from his hunting and asked about his daughter the queen told him that Hema eloped with someone. The king believed it and sent his men searching for Hema and her escort in all directions. Vijay came to know of this from people talking in the streets and informed Hema. They were both in a false position and the king was not likely to believe the truth. So they decided to start that very night and go away.



The Brahman who gave them shelter overheard what they said between themselves and he knew that the girl was none other than Princess Hema and that the queen tried to put her to death.

Meanwhile Hema and Vijay slipped away at midnight upon the horse. After journeying for several days without rest they reached a far-off town called Jayapur.

Here they broke their journey and put up in a rest-house for the night. Hema could not sleep. Brought up in the midst of all

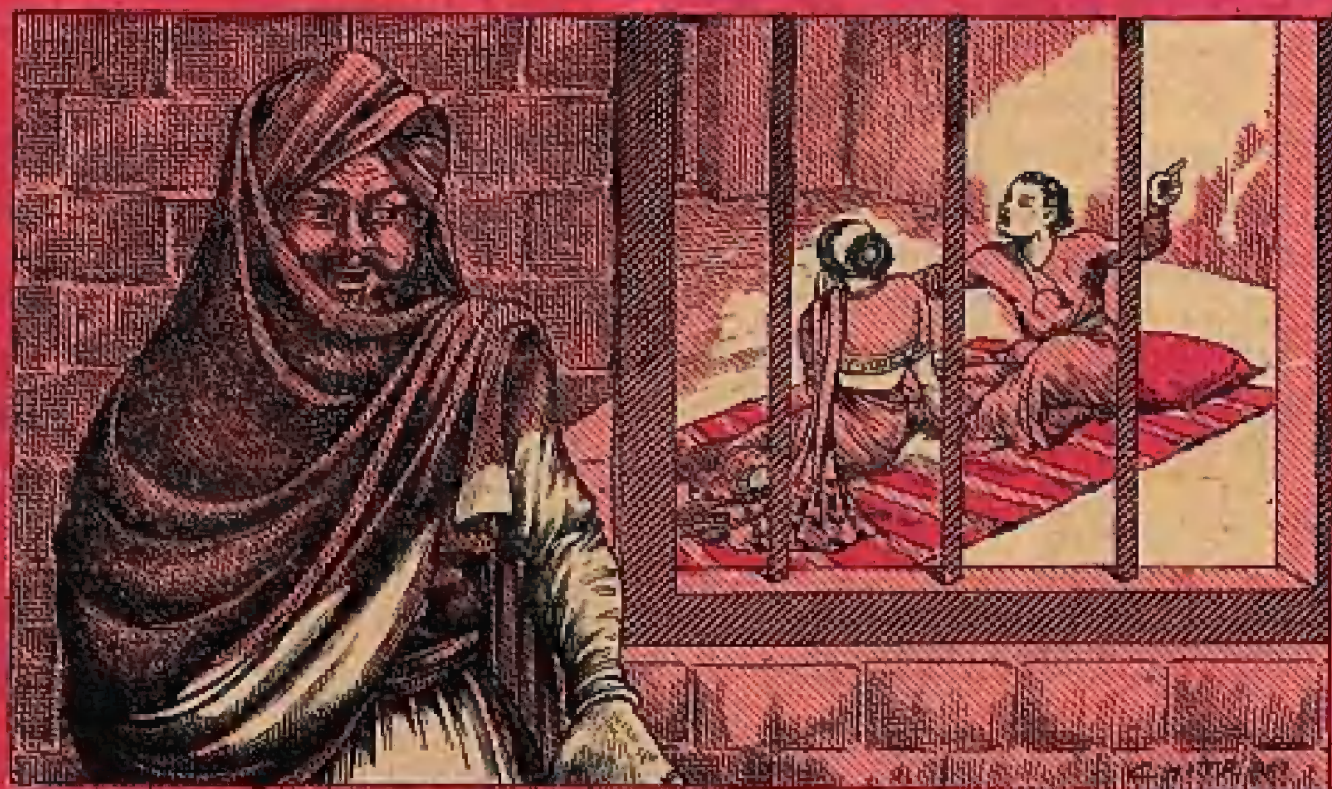
comforts and being the heiress to a throne, Hema began to bemoan her present condition of an exile and a homeless refugee.

"Don't take it to heart, Hema," Vijay consoled her. "Let me but see the king of this place once, I will give you a mansion of seven storeys and a golden swing."

These brave words reached the ear of King Bhima of the city. As a matter of fact the king was standing only a few feet from the rest-house when

Vijay said those words to Hema. King Bhima was in the habit of going out in disguise on a dark-night every month and listen to what the people said and he was out this very night.

The king was curious to see how this young man could provide for his wife a seven-storeyed mansion by simply seeing him once. So, when he went to court next morning, he said to his minister, "There is a certain young man who is now lodging in the rest-house with his wife whose name is Hema.



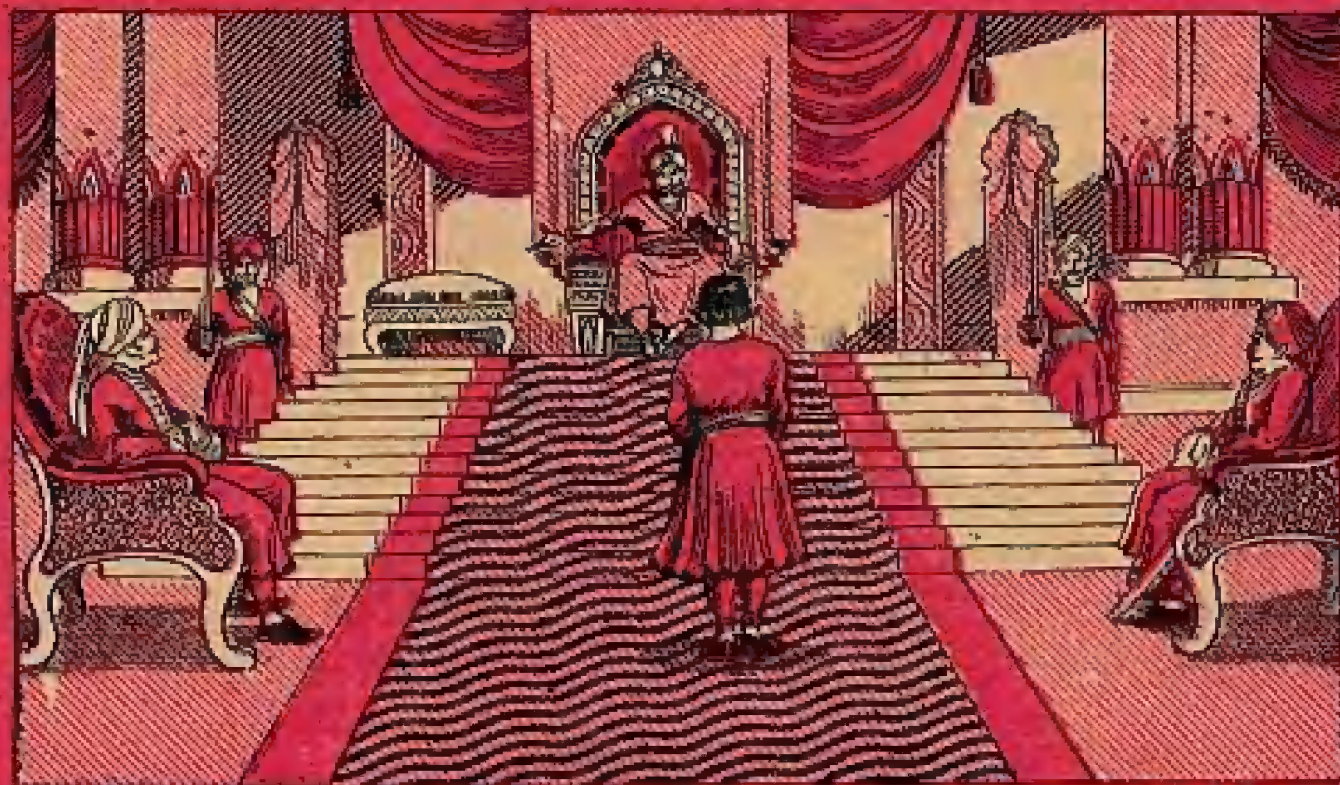
Kindly have him invited to court at once."

Messengers were dispatched to the rest-house and they soon returned with Vijay. King Bhima glanced at him once and showed him an empty seat near to his throne. Till the rising of the court the king never once looked at Vijay nor did he exchange a word with him.

At noon the king got up and so did everyone in the court. Most of the courtiers took leave of the king on the spot, whereas the others accompanied the king

up to the first floor, the second floor and the third floor in keeping with their high positions. Even the minister and the king's vassals accompanied him only to the fourth floor where they took leave of him. Vijay alone followed him to the sixth floor before he took leave of the king. Then he hastily came down the steps and, overtaking the departing courtiers asked them, "Which one is the minister?"

"Sir," replied the minister stepping forward, "I am the minister."





There was enough reason for the minister to show so much respect to this unknown youth. In the first place he got invited to the court without any formal application. Then again, only the king knew the young man and none else. Yet the king said nothing to him at court. They must have talked while the young man accompanied the king alone. Not knowing how close he was to the king the minister preferred to be polite with Vijay.

"Ah, you are the minister," Vijay said. "In that case be kind

enough to supply me at once with a thousand coolies with digging implements and three hundred guards with a hundred yards of measuring rope."

The minister never doubted that the young man had the king's consent and he arranged everything according to Vijay's demand. Accompanied by the coolies, guards, digging implements and the measuring rope Vijay trekked the city streets. Whenever he saw a huge building or a newly built mansion he stopped and asked for the owner of the house. When the owner presented himself before him Vijay told him, "We are widening the streets. Vacate your house at once. What are you gaping at, you stupid louts? Start with the walls and pull down the house!"

"Kind sir, wait a moment!" the house-owner begged Vijay. "Step inside and we shall talk it over properly."

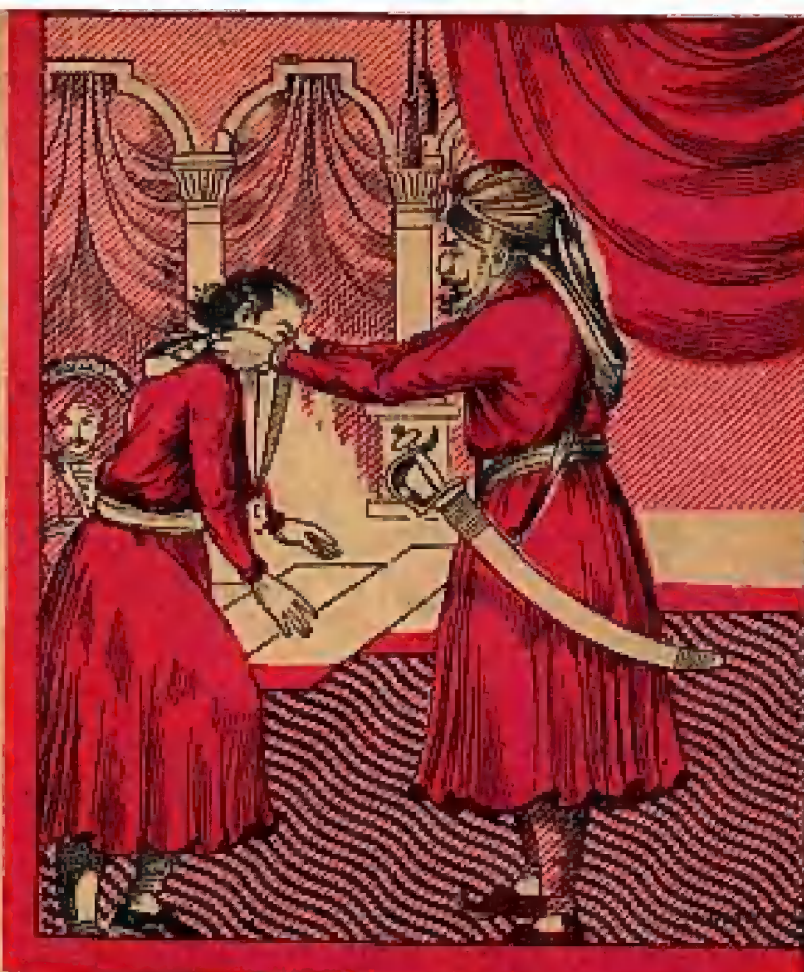
The talking consisted of offering money-bags and a prayer to save the house. Vijay was touch-

ed with the prayer and took the bags of money. Then he went to another house where the same thing was repeated. By evening Vijay was in possession of immense wealth. He sent off the coolies and guards after paying them handsomely.

On the following day Vijay purchased a seven-storeyed mansion in the heart of the city and furnished it like a palace. He got a swing of gold for Hema and began to live luxuriously.

A month went by and King Bhima came out into the city one night in disguise. When he came to the centre of the city he was surprised to see a seven-storeyed mansion so brightly illuminated and luxurious that his own palace could not hold a candle to it. On inquiry the king found that the mansion belonged to the young man whom he called to court a month back. Evidently the youth was as good as his word and he fulfilled his promise to his wife.

King Bhima summoned Vijay to see him and learnt from him what actually happened. It oc-



curred to the king that his own minister was a fool and that Vijay would make a much better minister. At once Vijay became the minister of King Bhima.

Some time elapsed. Hema gave birth to a son. The entire city celebrated the birth of the minister's son. But Hema did not feel any great joy. What joy could she find in seeing that her husband who should have been sitting on her father's throne was minister to some other ruler and people called her son the minister's son while he was

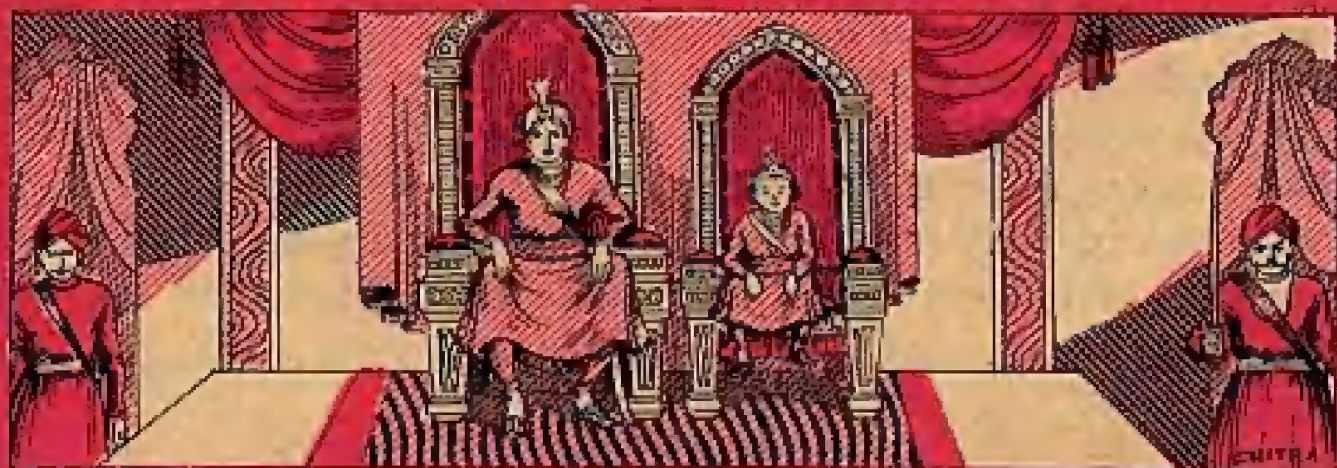
actually the crown prince of another state? She constantly yearned to be in her own country with her father.

But Hema could not go back. King Bala-Vardhan would order her to be put to death the moment he saw her. Nor was it easy after so long a time to prove that the queen had attempted to kill Hema. On the other hand Hema had a husband and a son to prove the charge of the queen that Hema had eloped with someone. So Hema had to suppress her desire to be in her own country.

But truth will be out. The Brahman who had given asylum to Hema at one time, went to the King and told him the truth which he knew by overhearing

the talk between Vijay and Hema before they left his house. The king clapped his wife in prison and sent his messengers to far-off countries to search for his innocent daughter. Some of these messengers arrived at Jayapur and Vijay came to learn the tale they told everyone. Through him Hema learnt it.

Now that her period of exile was at an end Hema's happiness knew no bounds. Vijay told everything to King Bhima and resigned his job as minister. Then he went to Kari-pur with his wife and son. King Bala-varadhan shed tears of joy on seeing his daughter again. He crowned Vijay as King and his grandson as the Crown Prince. Hema lived with them happily.





THE LAWFUL HEIR

ONCE there was a learned man named Puneeth. Sudam was his only son. This boy made no progress in his studies and took to evil ways. Puneeth had a house, a yard and some cash. But his son, Sudam began to spend away all the money.

Puneeth thought that his son might change if he was married. He found a good-looking wife for Sudam and performed his marriage. In course of time Sudam became father of children. Even then he did not give up his evil and wasteful ways.

Now Puneeth knew that nothing would change his son. With this worry he took to bed and eventually died. With his father out of his way Sudam went from

bad to worse. He spent away all the money, sold his house and yard to a certain bania merchant and left the village with his wife and children.

Wherever he went ill luck followed Sudam and he was reduced to begging in his last days. Finally he died a miserable death in a far-off place.

The merchant who bought Sudam's house was not very lucky either. He suffered a huge loss in his business and by the time he died he had only the house and the yard to call his own. His son Ram Gupta came into possession of this house and yard.

Ram Gupta was a wise and well-behaved man. Though his father left him no wealth, he

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impressed the rich people of his community by his honesty and, with their help, he set up a small store in the bazar. He found the yard attached to the house lying waste. He thought of digging it and converting it into a modest kitchen-garden.

One evening he closed his shop earlier than usual and came home. He took up a crow-bar and began digging the yard. In one place the crow-bar struck against something and made a metallic noise. It turned out to be a treasure-trove consisting of two

sealed and linked brass vessels. Ram Gupta took the vessels inside and showed them to his wife. But when the seals were broken the couple were greatly disappointed. Both the vessels were filled to the brim with dead scorpions.

"We have no right to this property. It belongs to some one else," Ram Gupta said.

"Who wants such property?" said his wife "Throw it away!"

"It is all gold, my dear," Ram Gupta told his wife. "Make no mistake about it. But until the lawful heir comes to claim it it will not manifest its true appearance."

"I don't believe it," said his wife. "Show it to every person and if no one is able to see that it is gold throw away the lot."

Ram Gupta took four scorpions to his shop and hung them in the four corners by strings. His customers saw the scorpions and asked him, "What made you hang these scorpions in the shop?"

"I am a poor man," Ram Gupta replied. "They say scor-

pion is a symbol of wealth. They may bring me luck."

"May they truly bring you luck," the customers said.

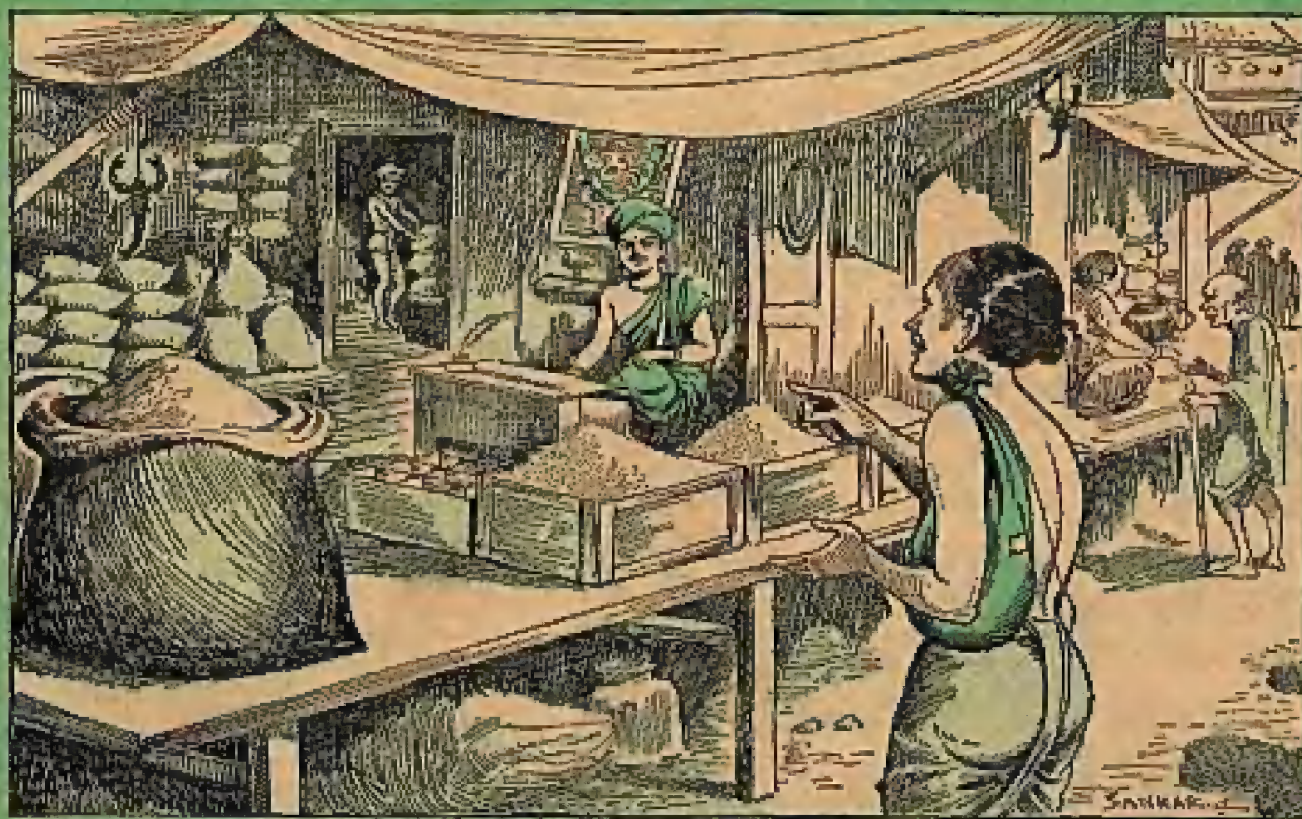
One day a young man came to this shop wishing to buy some provisions. He was Sudam's last son. He looked up and saw the scorpions hanging at the four corners of the shop. He turned to the owner of the shop and said smiling, "The respected shop-owner is evidently so rich that he hangs costly ornaments by threads to decorate his shop.

Why can't he gift away some surplus gold to a poor man like me?"

Ram Gupta was struck dumb for a moment. Then he stood up saying, "Why not, sir? There is plenty of gold in my house. Come and take it."

Seeing that the youth did not believe him, Ram Gupta said again quite seriously, "I am not joking, believe me. Come to my house and take the gold."

The youth followed the merchant to his house and Ram Gupta placed the two brass ves-



sels before him and said, "Please take them."

The youth looked into the vessels. They were filled with gold. He could not guess why the merchant was giving away so much gold to him. After all the house looked quite poor and the merchant could not be rich.

"Why don't you keep some of it yourself?" the youth asked Ram Gupta.

"Sir," said Ram Gupta, "What's the use of keeping that which refuses to be of any value?" He narrated to the youth the entire story of the treasure-trove.

"So this house was once ours. I know that my grand-father used to live in this village. My father

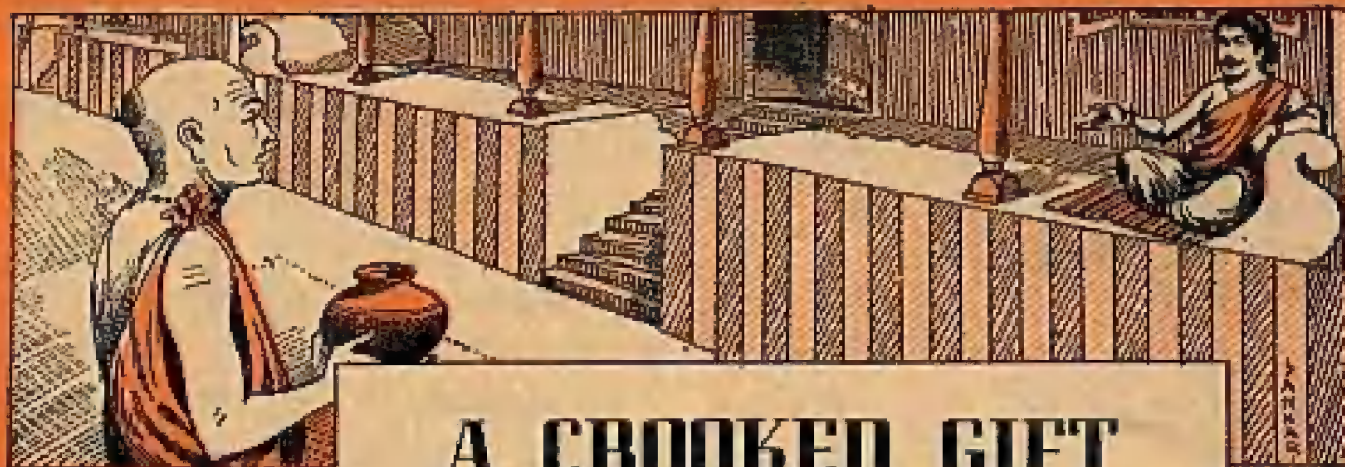
sold away all the property and left this place. I never knew anything but poverty since my childhood. It was only luck that brought me to your shop. Now, I shall accept your gift on one condition."

"What is it?" asked Ram Gupta.

"You must take half of it back as my gift," the youth said.

Ram Gupta was greatly touched at the youth's generosity and the youth departed with only one vessel of gold. Then Ram Gupta and his wife hastily emptied the other vessel on the floor. They saw a heap of shining ornaments of gold instead of dead scorpions.





A CROOKED GIFT

THE *patwari* of Chandranagar was a very rich man. He had extensive lands and numberless cattle. Still he was never known to part with a copper. He guarded his possessions like a dog.

Now it came about that one of the *patwari's* cows became ill and was about to die. Its stomach was bloated and it could hardly breathe. The *patwari* was immersed in deep sorrow. He was about to lose not only a cow but also a couple of rupees besides. The *paraiah* would charge two rupees to remove the dead cow.

Two heads are better than one and it is always better to share one's sorrow. The *patwari* discussed the affair with his wife. This lady was as niggardly as her

husband. She said, "Let the cow die, we cannot stop it. But try to save the expense."

"Yes, yes," said the *patwari*. "That is my anxiety too."

The *patwari* sitting on the pial of his house saw a Brahman beggar come along the street. This man was a new arrival in the village. The *patwari* was struck with an idea on seeing him.

"O Brahman," the *patwari* said, "I am about to send for you when you yourself turned up."

"Well, sir," the Brahman said, "what is the matter?"

"When I fell ill some time back I swore to gift away a cow to a Brahman. I have been postponing it until today. Today I decided to give away the cow.

You are a man with kids and the cow will come in handy for you. Come with me and take away the cow," the *patwari* said.

The Brahman was beside himself with joy. He had a number of kids and finding milk for them was a job for him. He was only surprised to find the *patwari* so generous, for he had heard he was a stringent man and avoided asking anything of him.

"I shall be very happy to receive the gift. Only, today is the eighth day of the moon and tomorrow the ninth, both inauspi-

cious days. So I shall take away the cow on the day after tomorrow," the Brahman said.

"No, No," said the *patwari*, "you must take it today. I hate postponing things. There is nothing like an inauspicious day to take the gift of a cow."

The Brahman was really sentimental about inauspicious days but if he refused to take the cow now the *patwari* might give her away to someone else. So the Brahman consented.

Both of them went to the *patwari's* cattle yard and the



patwari showed the Brahman the dying cow and said, "There's your cow. Take her away."

Now the Brahman could see why the stingy *patwari* was making a gift of the cow. He also understood why the man was in such a hurry.

"Poor thing!" said the Brahman. "It seems to be ailing."

"Did I say that it was not?" the *patwari* retorted. "This was the cow I wanted to give away. Sick or dead it is now yours. I have gifted it to you and all responsibility of the cow is yours."

"So be it," said the Brahman. "One cannot alter another's luck. Give me a few minutes and I shall take away my cow."

The Brahman went about the yard in search of some herb. As a matter of fact this Brahman's

father was a highly gifted veterinary physician and he was aware of some of the ailments of cattle and their cure.

Soon the Brahman picked up some leaves and squeezed their juice into the nostrils of the ailing cow. The cow gave a violent sneeze and a great lump of mucus dropped out of its mouth and the cow got up as though there was nothing the matter with her.

The Brahman put a halter round the cow's neck and, thanking the *patwari*, departed with the cow. The *patwari* was speechless with sorrow as well as surprise.

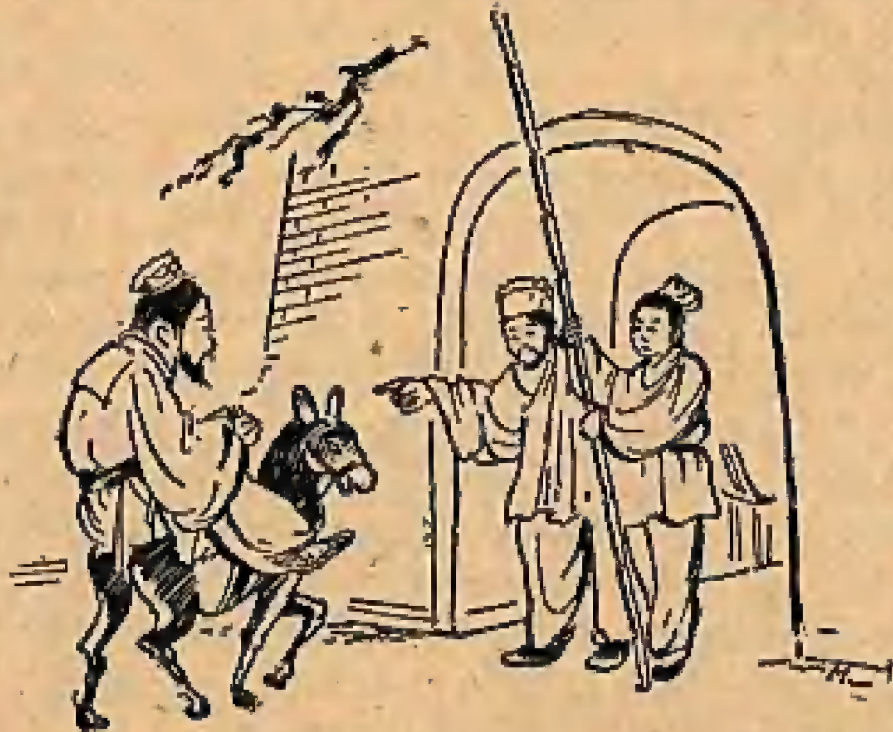
"Such a fine cow!" he wailed before his wife. "And I have simply given it away to that Brahman beggar!" Both wife and husband shed tears over the cow for quite a long time.



THE WISE ADVISER

A man carrying a bamboo pole came to the city gate. He held the pole up-right and tried to get it through, but the

gate was too low. Then he tried it cross-wise but the gate was too narrow. What to do?



An onlooker suggested that he should go and consult a wise man who lived near at hand.

Just then, the wise man came riding by on his donkey. He graciously consented to give the advice asked.

But before he began, the people noticed that he was not sitting in the saddle, but on the donkey's hindquarters.

When they inquired the reason, he answered, "Any fool can see why. The reins are too long."



THE WISE TEACHER

Once there was a wise man who had several disciples studying with him. One night the wise man woke up from his sleep and, waking up one of his disciples, asked him to see if there were signs of the dawn in the east. The boy returned and said, "Sir, it is so dark that I can see nothing."

"What a fool!" said the wise man. "If it is dark can't you take the lamp with you to see properly?"

DEARER THAN LIFE!

ONCE there was a fool who was also a great miser. He and his wife lived on corn flour without salt. Unfortunately this miser one day thought of treating himself to some sweet porridge. He ordered his wife to make him some and lay down on his bed waiting for it. Some one knocked on the door and the wife went to open it. An acquaintance stood outside and asked the woman, "Is your husband in?" The wife returned to her husband without replying and informed him that (such-and-such person came for him. "You fool, sit at my feet weeping and I shall pretend to be dead. After he is gone we can eat the porridge," the miser told his wife.

The visitor came in and saw that the miser was lying on his bed as one dead and his wife, who was quite normal when she opened the door, was now in unconsolable grief. Also there was the smell of porridge from the kitchen.

The visitor wanted to teach the miser a lesson and began to cry very loudly, "Oh, my friend! You are no more!" Soon the relatives of the miser arrived and, hearing that he was dead, started preparations for his burial.

"This is going too far. You had better get up now!" the wife whispered in her husband's ear and the fool shouted, "If I get up now all these rogues will eat our porridge. Let come what may. I am dead!"



A GOOD EATER

GOHA, the witty man of Cairo, happened to travel with a caravan.

At the first camp all the men sat down to eat their ration of one loaf of bread and one egg. In the desert food was scarce and rationing was unavoidable.

Goha too was given his portion but he did not start eating as the others did.

"Why don't you eat?" the others asked Goha.

"Must I?" asked Goha hesitatingly.

"Of course, you must eat!" the others insisted.

"In that case," said Goha, brightening, "give me half a loaf of bread and half an egg each. Because if you give me all the loaves and all the eggs I shall not be able to eat them."

Everyone laughed and Goha was supplied with extra rations because he was a good eater.



WHAT IS ILL-LUCK?

A certain man was tired after a long journey. He went to sleep on the edge of a deep pit. As he was about to fall into the pit the goddess of Luck woke him up saying, "Get up and sleep farther away. If you fall into the pit on account of your foolishness you will be blaming me for it."



USELESS GOLD

A great miser sold all his property and converted it into gold. He hid the gold in a secret place and feasted his eyes on it every day. Some one found out the miser's secret and stole the gold. The miser discovered the theft and wept, tearing his hair.

A passer-by saw this and said to the miser, "Why should you weep? You never intended to put the gold to any use. So it is the same whether you have it or lose it. You may as well put a stone in the place of the lost gold and imagine that it is gold."



SOME time back, when the All-India Magicians Conference took place at Ballygunj in Bengal, I was asked to demonstrate some magic and I did the following.

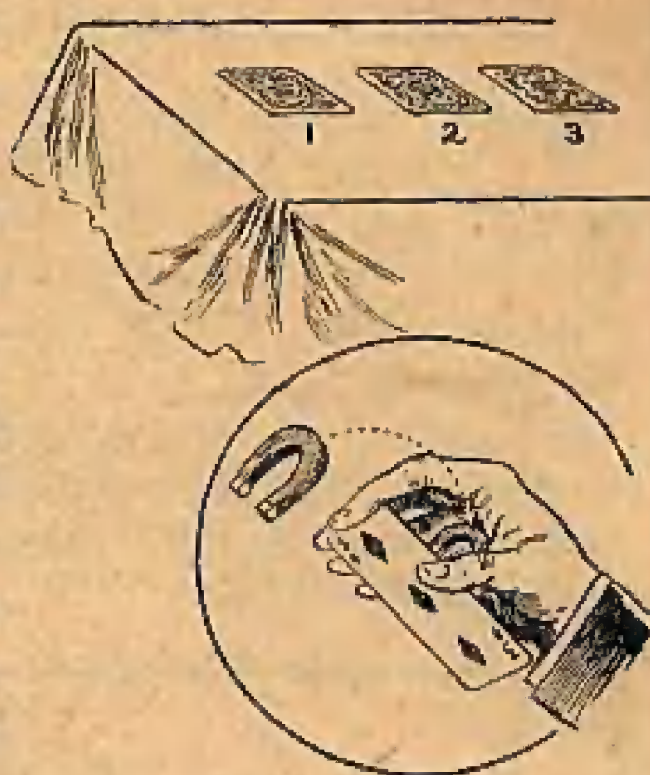
I used a new four-anna coin and three playing cards for the demonstration. Put the coin on the table and cover it with a card. This card is indicated by the number 1 in the illustration. Then proceed to place two more cards at the places indicated by numbers 2 and 3. If anyone asks where the four-

MAGIC

PROF. P. C. SORCAR

anna coin is you can unhesitatingly reply that it is under card number 1. When you lift the card the coin can be seen. You may also lift cards 2 and 3 to show that there is nothing underneath them. Then the magician proceeds to spirit away the coin from under the card by the help of his magic wand. When card 1 is lifted up there is nothing under it. It has gone under card 2. Similarly it can go under card 3, too, to the amazement of the spectators. As a matter of fact the coin can be made to go under any one of the cards 1, 2 and 3. The spectators will be puzzled. They do not understand how the coin has shifted from under one card to another.

But it is quite easy to do. For this you require three cards and three new four anna coins. The magician keeps hidden in his hand a powerful magnet. (See illustration). Hiding anything in the hand is called "palming" and all magicians are familiar with it. When you touch any of the cards with the magnet, the magnet attracts the coin and it sticks to the underside of the card and is lifted with it, but when the magnet is kept slightly away from the card it cannot lift the coin and it is visible on the table to the spectators. The whole trick lies in "palming" the magnet. But only new four-anna coins must be used since the magnet cannot attract old ones. It is necessary that the three coins should be identical in appearance, date as well as shin-



ing. Otherwise the spectators will notice the changes in the coins when they are shown under different cards. This trick is quite simple but impresses the uninitiated very well.

[Readers who want to know further details about this trick may write to the following address, giving reference to CHANDAMAMA. All correspondence should be in English and addressed to—Prof. P. C. Sorecar, Magician, Post Box 7878, Calcutta-12.]

TOWARDS PEACE

One day Heracles was going along a certain path when he saw a thing on the ground that was the size of an apple and put his foot on it. At once it grew twice in size. Heracles got wild and began to hit it with his club. As he went on hitting, it grew larger and larger and stood right across his path.

Then Athena appeared before Heracles and said, "Stop it, Heracles. This thing is the spirit of strife. The more you kick it the more it grows. If you leave it alone it will subside and there will be peace."



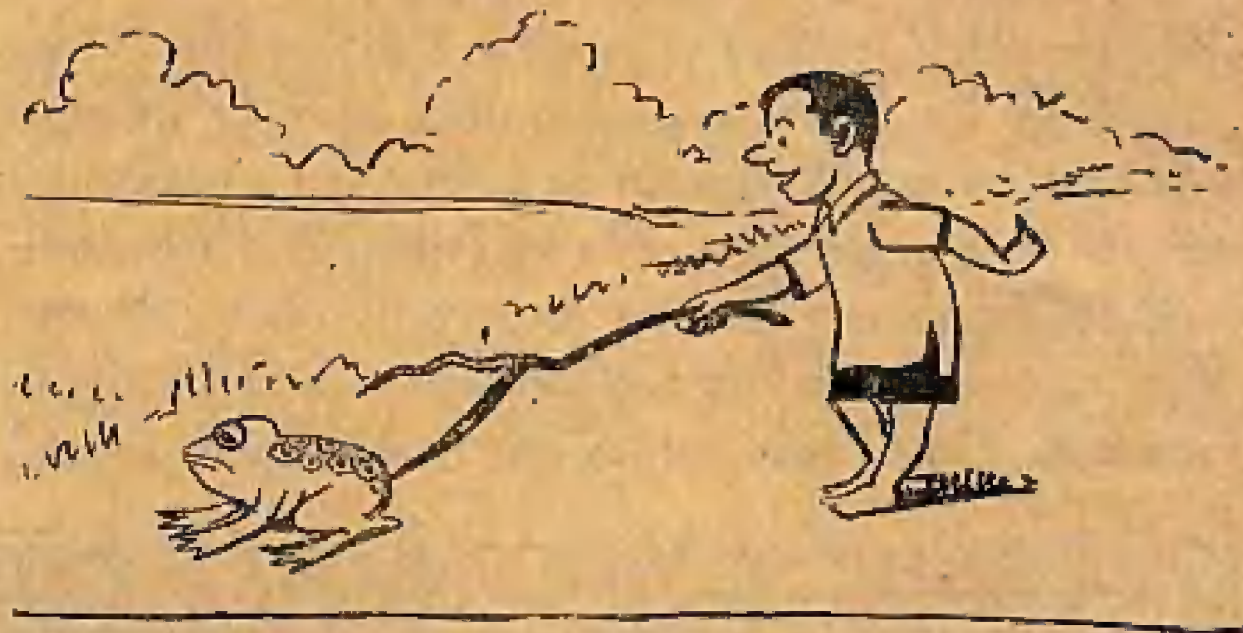
WRONG THING, WRONG TIME

Once a boy had been to bathe in a river and accidentally got caught in the current. He cried for help.

A gentleman on the bank heard the cries and began to lecture the boy on the dangers of carelessness.

"First save me," cried the lad. "I can hear to your sermons later."

ACTION and REACTION

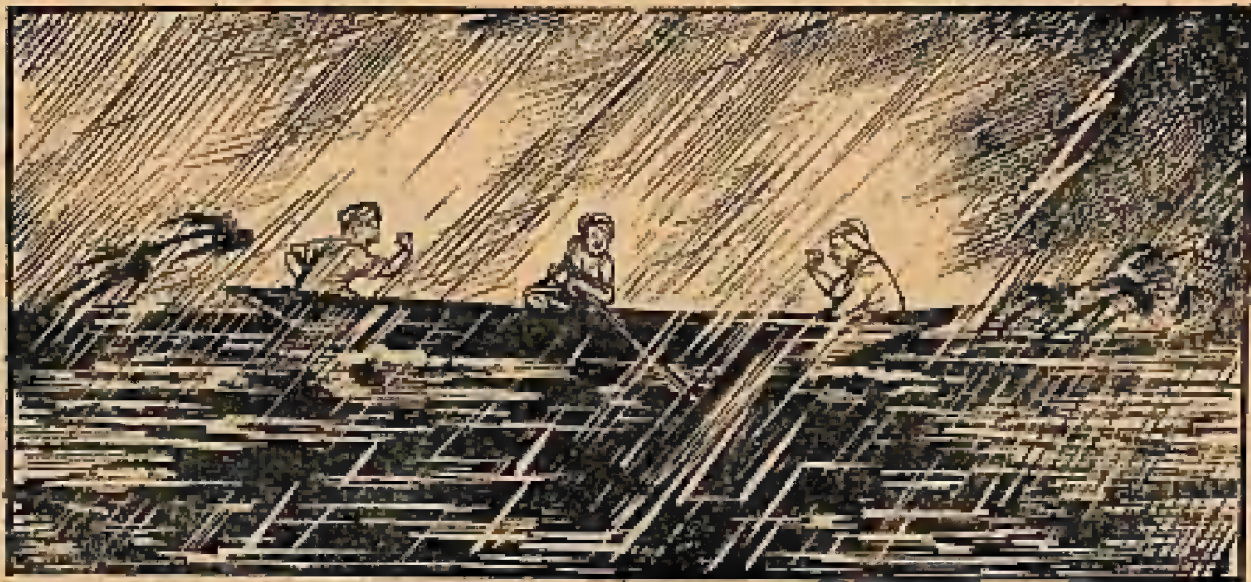


श्री.मि.अभ्यंकर.

—S. B. ABHYANKAR

DEADLY ENEMIES

Two enemies happened to travel in the same boat. They kept the maximum distance between them by sitting at either end of the boat. There arose a storm and it was evident that the boat would sink. The man sitting near the rudder asked the steersman which part of the boat would sink first. When he was told that the forepart would go under first he exclaimed, "Ah, I shall see my enemy sink before I sink"



SELF-PRAISE

A man once wrote some trash-praising himself and showed it to Aesop for his opinion.

"You are well justified in praising yourself," said Aesop, "Because there is no chance of others doing it for you."

THE BACK COVER

PORTRAIT ON THE WALL-5

MISTRESS Clever was very angry. "I am not leaving my husband," she told the Emperor. "He is greater than you in every respect." Then she walked out of the palace.

"How does she dare to say that her husband is superior to me in every respect!" the Emperor shouted in anger. "I'll show her which one of us is superior."

He called a servant and told him, "Go to Chuang and tell him that he will have to race with me on horseback tomorrow. Whoever wins the race will have Mistress Clever." The servant conveyed the message to Chuang.

Mistress Clever was not perturbed in the least when she heard this. "Don't be afraid," she told Chuang, "you shall win the race."

She made a horse out of bamboo and paper and blew upon it once. Immediately it changed into a real white horse. Chuang was greatly surprised at this.

The next day the Emperor raced with Chuang on horse back. The Emperor's horse began to race ahead of Chuang's horse. The Emperor turned back and mocked at Chuang.

But as they approached their destination Chuang's horse made a spurt and, going ahead of the Emperor's horse, reached the goal first. Seeing this the people who came to watch the race cheered Chuang.

"Enough?" Chuang asked the Emperor.

"No," said the Emperor. "Tomorrow we are going to have a boat - race. If you win that race you can keep your wife."

FIND THE WAY!



Here is a babe who has managed to crawl to the centre of the maze. Its mother, father, sister and brother entered the maze from its four corners. Three of them came back where they started without even seeing the babe while the fourth alone reached the babe and came out with it.

Which one of the four succeeded in finding the babe? What was the path taken? Solve the puzzle for yourself.

PHOTO CAPTION COMPETITION

JANUARY 1956

11

AWARD Rs. 10/-



- ★ Choose apt and significant captions for the above pair of photos. The captions should go in a pair, either words, phrases or short sentences.

- ★ The captions should reach us before 10th of November '55.

The pair of captions considered best will be awarded Rs. 10/-

- ★ Please write legibly or type the captions on a postcard and address it to: "Chandamama Photo Caption Competition," Madras-26.

RESULTS FOR NOVEMBER

I. *Photo* : Natural Swimming Pools...

II. *Photo* : Make Many Gazing Fools!

Contributed by :

T. GOPALAKRISHNA BHASKER C/o Sri Nalam Ramalingaiah, KAKINADA

AWARD Rs. 10

ANCIENT ANIMALS

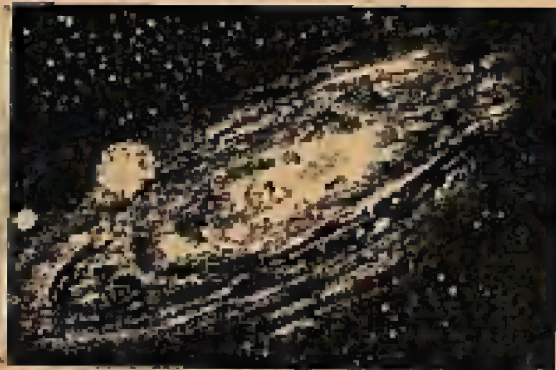
FISHES were the first creatures to have a backbone. During the Age of Fishes they multiplied in great numbers. Some of them even developed lungs to breathe out of water. At the end of the Age of Fishes some animals began to live on land. Among such creatures there were scorpions, spiders, very huge dragonflies and giant cockroaches—all *invertebrates*.

But *amphibians* were the first creatures with backbones to live on land. They came out of soft eggs laid in water, lived in water until they resembled their parents and then came on to the land.

The *reptiles* were the first creatures to be born on land out of eggs with hard shells. When they came out of the egg they fully resembled their parents. The reptiles first appeared on earth about 275 million years ago. During the next 150 million years they acquired such huge bodies that their sizes still remain unique.

There were many thousands of varieties of reptiles. All the giant reptiles that lived on land are called "dinosaurs", or terrible lizards. The reptile called *Tyrannosaurus* was a really terrible creature, 18 or 20 feet high, the largest flesh eater of all time, with a mouth that was a yard wide when fully open and with sharp teeth. It also had sharp claws. With the help of its huge tail it walked erect. *Triceratops* was an armoured dinosaur with three horns. Its armour was only on its head. It was a plant eater. *Brontosaurus* was 70 feet long from its nose to the tip of its tail and weighed about 35 tons. When it walked the land must have shook. It too was a plant eater. Its brain was far too small for its body and it must have been a stupid creature.





OTHER SUNS

All the bright dots we see in the sky on a clear night are other suns—except the planets which look like stars because of sunlight falling upon them. But we can make out the planets easily because they do not appear in the

same part of the sky always. They were once called “wandering stars.”

- * We cannot see more than about 3,000 stars with the naked eye, but some of the best telescopes reveal millions of millions of stars. All the stars in the sky are not evenly spread out in space; they are grouped into *galaxies*. With the help of a powerful telescope we can see several galaxies scattered in space.
- * Our Sun is in the Milky Way Galaxy along with millions of other suns. Some of the galaxies are so far away that we cannot even conceive the distances. For instance, there is the Great Spiral Nebula (see picture) from which light reaches us after 9,00,000 of years, travelling at the rate of 6 million million miles a year! Remember that there are millions of such galaxies in space and much farther away.
- * Even the stars of our own galaxy are not very near to us. The nearest star to us is Proxima Centauri and it is 4 and odd “light years” away. Dog Star, the brightest star in the sky, is 9 light years away and another star, Antares is 400 light years away.
- * Some of the stars are much bigger than our Sun. For instance, Antares is 70 million times as big as the Sun. Another star, Betelgeuse is so big that if it stood where the Sun stands our Earth would have been inside it!
- * Stars are of different colours according to their temperatures—blue-white, white, yellowish-white, yellow, orange and red. Blue-white stars are the hottest and red ones least hot. Our Sun is a yellow star.



NEWS ITEMS

The world's most up-to-date television transmitting station was opened on September 13, at Croydon near London. Only four engineers are required to man it at any given time.

At a Conference convened by UNESCO at Edinburgh, it was agreed that an international centre for childrens' films should be founded. The provisional council and secretariat will operate from Paris.

On September 11, Acharya Vinoba Bhave's 61st birthday was celebrated throughout the country. President Rajendra Prasad, Vice-President Dr. Radhakrishnan, Pandit G. B. Pant and others took part in the celebrations at Delhi. Speeches were made on *bhoodan* movement started by Acharyaji.

The worst floods in 150 years occurred in Orissa State during September and 6,000 square miles of land was under water. In several places people were marooned and food had to be dropped by air. Communications were destroyed. Cuttack, Puri, Balasore and stray pockets along Mahanadi and Brahmini rivers were affected. Prime Minister Nehru paid a two-day visit to Orissa State.



Bharat Ratna Dr. M. Visvesvaraya the eminent engineer-statesman of Mysore was 95 on September 15. Mysore's Chief Minister and Home Minister were among those who felicitated the savant on his birthday celebrated at Bangalore.

* * *

India has accepted from Canada under the Colombo Plan an atomic reactor which will commence arriving in Bombay in 1957. It will be assembled there. A team of Indian scientists had been to Canada. They are designing the cooling system and auxiliary plant of the reactor. Another reactor is being designed in India.

* * *

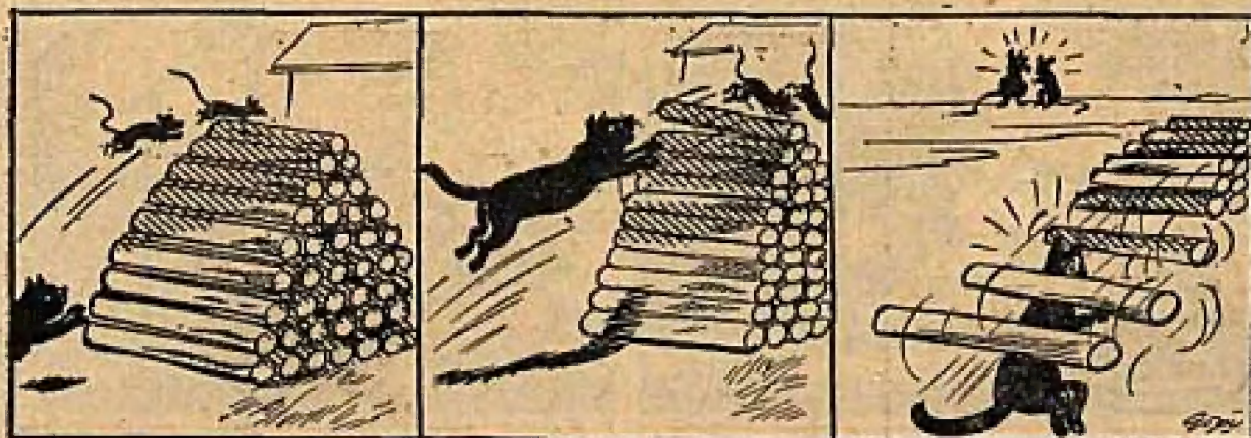
On October 2, Gandhi Jayanti was celebrated in Madras with Prime Minister Pandit Nehru addressing a mammoth meeting on the beach opposite to the fort.

* * *

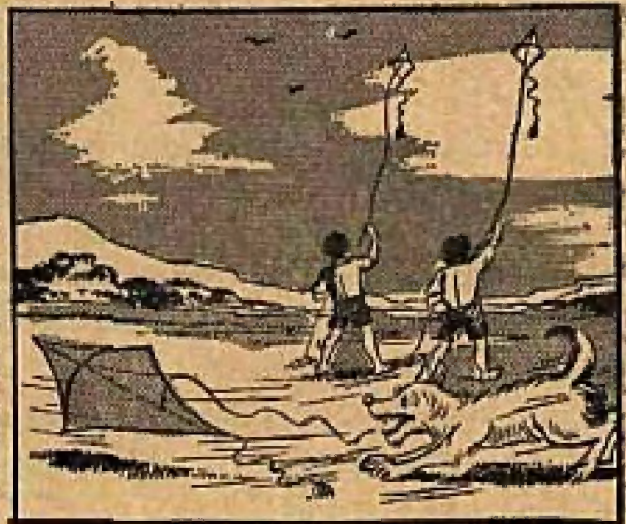
Prime Minister Pandit Nehru inaugurated the first coach from the Integral Coach Factory at Perambur on October 2. He pressed the button that made the first all-steel light coach roll out of the factory.

* * *

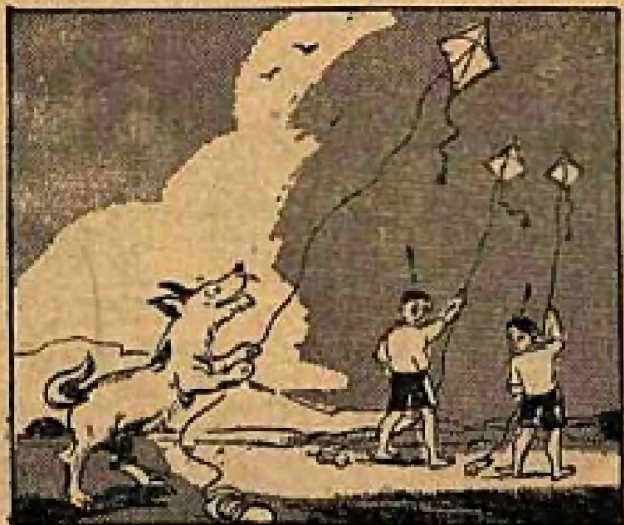
About 1,300 musicians from all over the country will be taking part in the music competition organised by All India Radio. The competition is open to persons between the ages of 16 and 21 who have not broadcast from AIR before October 3, 1954. 138 people are entering the competition from Bombay region, 127 from Calcutta, 115 from Madras and 102 from Delhi. There will be separate competitions for Karnatak and Hindusthani styles; for vocal and instrumental music; for ladies and men and so on.

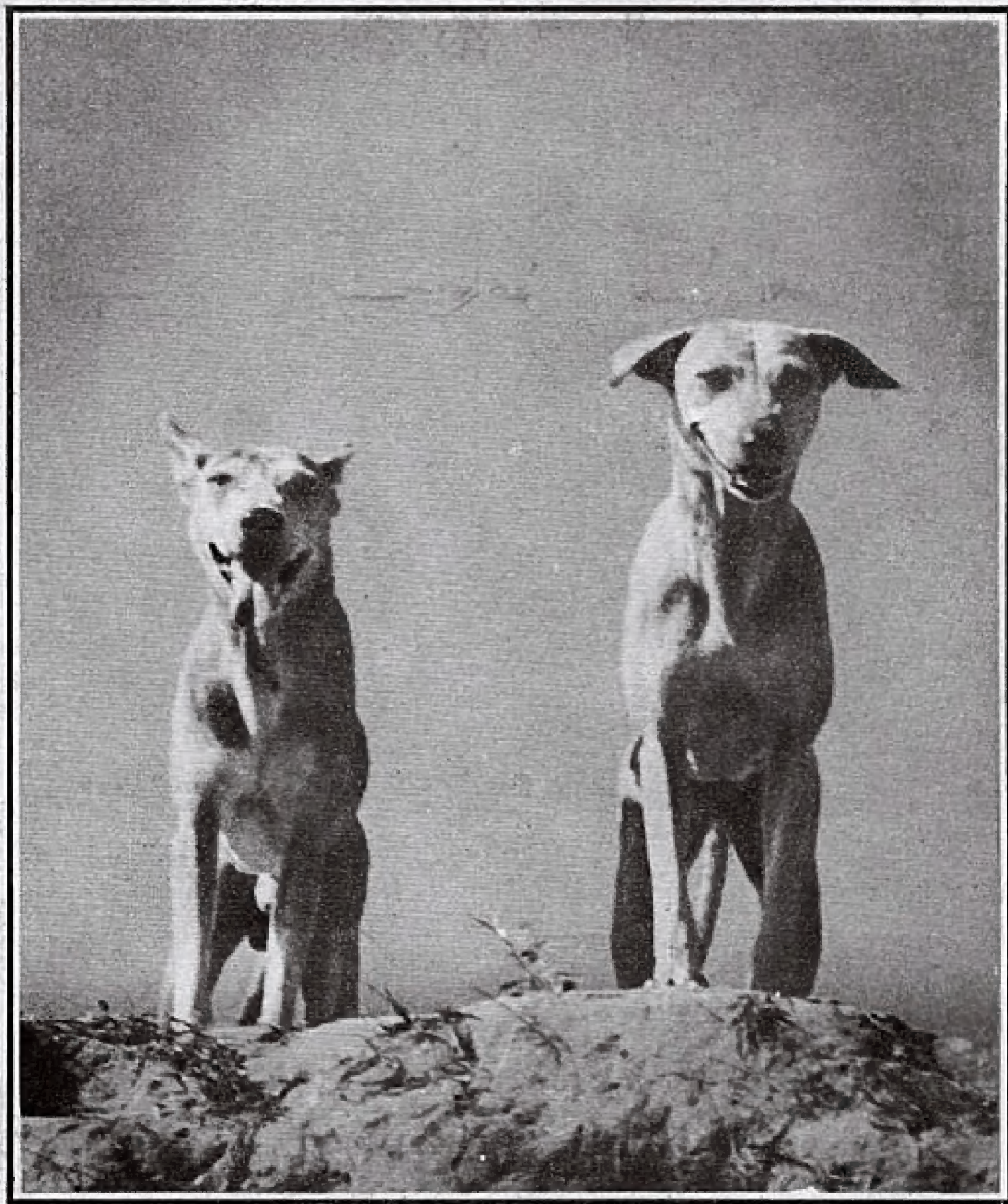


Picture Story



One Sunday Dass and Vass started out to fly kites. On the way Dass proposed a bet: two annas for the one who flew the kite highest. Vass agreed to the bet and both of them let their kites up into the sky. "Tiger" got himself interested in a spare kite which was fluttering on the ground. He caught its string in his paws. Soon the kite of "Tiger" was flying higher than those of Dass and Vass! Both the boys agreed that "Tiger" won the bet for kite-flying and bought him two annas worth of biscuits.





Winning
Caption

MAKE MANY GAZING FOOLS!

Contributed by
T. G. K. Bhasker, Kakinada

